

空戦魔導士候補生の教官

諸星 悠

イラスト・甘味みきひろ

1



ファンタジア文庫

諸星 悠
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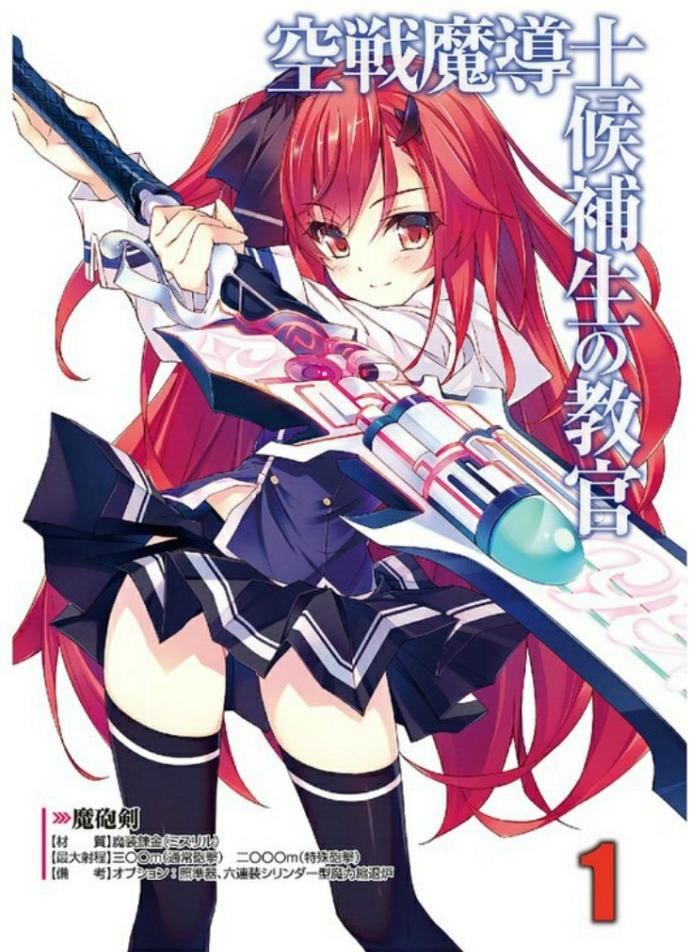
イラスト：甘味みきひろ
カバーデザイン：ビィビィ

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1





»魔砲剣

[材] 鋼
[重] 15kg
[大きさ] 1.8m
[射程] 300m
[威力] 2000m
[備考] オプション: 照準器、六連装シリンダー型魔力送達器

1



「大丈夫ですよ、何かあつたら
この《寂滅姫》が責任を取りますから」

Prologue

One thing I must clarify first.

This should be known to everyone, effort is meant for mortals. Creeping forward on the ground or training earnestly does not suit a Goddess such as myself. Even studying is the same, completing the homework on time set by instructors, obediently accepting the examinations imposed, are things only mortals that are restricted by common sense do. I, as a Goddess, am an existence beyond humanity, there is no need to do those things.

Hng! Remember this well. My name is Rico·Flamel, the Goddess incarnate.

It seems that your thinking capacity has reached the limit for a mortal. Having that expression on your face means you were unable to comprehend what I was saying. Fine, let me explain the situation of the current world to you.

It has been ages since humanity lost the land.

The so-called survival circle did not exist on the ground. The surface had been blanketed by a type of monster called Magical Armoured Insect, humans could only migrate to Floating Cities just to survive. I was currently in one of such huge artificial constructions that floated in the sky, known as the Floating City — Floating Academy City 「Mystogan」

— living as a Kuusen Madoushi Division student.

However, this is only my disguise to blend into the world. The ugly mortals are envious of my beauty, even to the extent of harbouring evil jealousy, and to actually demand this Goddess incarnate to write a reflection essay for not submitting my homework, they really did not know their place.

Be it the indoor class in the morning or the actual practise in the afternoon, effort is obviously something only mortals require, this Goddess has stressed that I do not need it, but nobody listened to me in the end.

Pui, you mortals that have worn the colored glasses of common sense. I will show you girls, my power one day!

Let's change the subject, I am currently still rated E rank by the Kuusen Madoushi Division. I have even fallen to the situation of being in the squadron with the worst performance, often labelled as F rank. By common sense, you may misunderstand that I am a so-called dunce. But I am not. Only a Goddess such as myself can become the hero to save the world.

However, why must I write this reflection essay for not submitting my homework? This is so incomprehensible. What did I do wrong?

Name: Rico·Flamel Content: Reflection essay for not submitting homework Revision 3

Review: Rejected Comment: This essay is supposed to reflect on the

mistake for not submitting homework. Perhaps you may want to boast about your hopeless personality, but as you have already advanced to second year preparatory, staying like this will never help you catch up. To prove the resolve of your effort, please write reflection essay revision 4.

“.....Eh, is this girl really from second year preparatory?”

“...It should be so.”

“Ahaha, how should I put it.....Why would the school let this kind of person continue attending?”

“...I heard that someone was reluctant to give up on her because she had rare talent.”

“Don’t tell me it’s because this kind of super delusional narcissist is not someone so simple?”

“Who knows? Could you not ask me this kind of question?”

“...Uh, then let me see the student profile. The next is...— Lecty. Lecty·Eisenach-san. Umm ~~ This girl’s profile is not detailed...But, at least her motivation for enrolling is worth reviewing.”

I-I.....I have a dream.

That is, to fly freely in the vast sky, become a Kuusen Madoushi and

fight against Magical Armoured Insects to protect the people of the Floating City.

Just thinking about fighting the Magical Armoured Insects caused me to shiver in fear. B-But! Fighting for the sake of protecting others is a wonderful thing, I-I think so!

Those normal people that do not possess magic are unable to fight for the sake of protecting their cherished ones.....Not to mention that once killed by Magical Armoured Insects, the memories related to the dead will vanish from the normal people, but Madoushi will remember those sad memories. However, I feel that being able to remember those people is a good thing. After all, I have seen too many normal people that feel sad from forgetting their cherished ones.

In order to let my Magic Twin Sword Style be useful in protecting the important people, no matter what, I must become a Kuusen Madoushi!

I-I...I-I-II! Came here for the sake of protecting the peace of this city!

Exile Period Year 439 August 3rd Extracted from
Lecty·Eisenach's interview on motivation Comment: Always on the edge, very emotional when speaking. Her grades were so-so during the entrance exam, originally considered to reject her admission, but was moved by her sincere motivation and the fame of her Magic Twin Sword Style's origin. Expecting her brilliant performance as a Kuusen Madoushi kouhosei.

"She feels like a really practical and hardworking student."

“But good people always die fast in our division.”

“Does this girl also have some problem?”

“Eeh. Her motivation and origin are outstanding, but her performance till now does not match them. Look at this mock battle report.”

“.....At one moment, she defeated the strong and the next moment she lost to the weak, she has an unstable performance.”

“That’s how it is. But her serious attitude can be affirmed.”

“Un~~ I feel that this girl should be fine. Knowing the importance of protecting others make her strong.”

“Since 「Nirvana」Chloe has said so, then I will believe in it.”

“Ahaha, stop teasing me. I’m not as great as what the Kuusen Madoushi Division Head said.”

“However, your squadron has nurtured many excellent talents. Even as an A rank squadron in the ranking battle last year, your squadron had taken first place, now promoted to S rank — as a Royal Guard, you aren’t able to participate for this year’s ranking battle.....Well, except for one member.”

“Do you mean...Kanata?”

“Exactly. That traitor Kanata·Age.”

“.....”

“The time he was active as S128’s ace was not bad. His stage performance was always eye-catching, but it also reflected his poor coordination. Even so he was popular amongst the citizens...However, Kanata·Age abandoned the important trial that would decide the advancement of the squadron to S rank without a reason. And after that, he didn’t participate in any special missions, he seems to be helping out the Logistics Division now. Weren’t there rumors that his comrades treated him as a traitor?”

“...It’s not a problem. Just speaking from results our squadron still became the Royal Guard, and also I believe in Kanata.”

“...Well fine. And this girl is the last person the instructor chosen from your squadron needs to be responsible for.”

Name: Misora·Whitale
Examination content: Preparatory first year first term practical exam (Individual Vanguard trial)
Kuusen Madoushi Division classmate mock battle Record: 0 Win 57 Lose
Comment: You can definitely win if you work hard.

Examination content: Preparatory first year first term practical re-exam (Individual Vanguard trial)
Kuusen Madoushi Division classmate mock battle Record: 0 Win 10 Lose (67 lose streak)
Comment: I think that you can definitely win if you continue to work hard.

Examination content: Preparatory first year second term practical exam (Individual Vanguard trial) Kuusen Madoushi Division classmate mock battle Record: 0 Win 57 Lose (124 lose streak) Comment: Even with effort there might be walls that cannot be overcome.

Examination content: Preparatory first year second term practical re-exam (Individual Vanguard trial) Kuusen Madoushi Division classmate mock battle Record: 0 Win 10 Lose (134 lose streak) Comment: ...Recommend to drop out.

“Umm...Thi-This girl’s future seems bleak!”

“That’s how it is. Her wish is to become a Magic Cannon Blader, but her movements are dull. If she encounters Magical Armoured Insects in the front line, she would probably be the first to fall.”

“...Magic cannon sword huh. She chose a rather anachronistic weapon.”

“Something like that. That weapon also reminds me of the traitor, Kanata, so I also do not appreciate it much...Ah! I’ve gotten off track. Returning to the main topic, the squadron these three girls formed — E601 squadron, is the weakest squadron even amongst the E rank squadrons...One month had passed since the start of school ranking battle, they are currently in ten lose streaks. Due to them being a gathering of the weakest people, they were mocked as F rank squadron by others. I want to borrow your Royal Guard’s power to somehow leverage the difference.”

“.....A normal instructor would probably be very harsh. Umm, but my recommendation for a member of my squadron that can take on the instructor role...”

“Mind me, this will be the request from the Kuusen Madoushi Division Head to Chloe·Sevegny. You do not have the privilege to refuse.”

“But.....Ah! — No, excuse me. I have something to confirm.”

“Tell me.”

“The member recommended by me, will be hired as a Kuusen Madoushi Division Instructor, right?”

“If it is the recommendation of 「Nirvana」, I swear on my pride to hire him. So, who is the one? As far as I'm concerned, I am expecting you, or maybe the vice-captain, Yuri·Flostre. If we leave this alone, there's a high possibility that those girls might not return from the battlefield after their sorties in the future.”

“About that — I recommend Kanata.”

“.....Errr...Can you please repeat that?”

“It's Kanata·Age.”

“— I refuse!”

“But! I won’t back down.”

“Why? Why that traitor Kanata·Age? You are also one of the people he betrayed.”

“But the person I recommended will definitely be hired by the Kuusen Madoushi Division Head right?”

“.....Let me hear the reason.”

“That’s true, the reason is —.....”

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Chapter 1 - The Strongest Traitor

Part 1

Beyond the opening heavy doors, artificial light lit up the interior. In the vast space that depth could not be perceived, large storage shelves could be seen stacking up like mountains. The warehouse in the late night gave off an inorganic atmosphere.

In the corner of such a place, a slim young man with messy hair was sitting on one of the empty shelves. Belonging to the same Kuusen Madoushi Division second year sophomore, a guy with golden hair — Lloyd·Alwin finally found his presence.

"I was thinking of eating together with you once in awhile, but what are you doing in this place?"

"Ah, Lloyd. Nice timing, take a look at this."

As the young man, Kanata, sitting on the shelf said so, he then tossed over a bundle of ten or so documents over.

"What is this?"

As Lloyd flipped through the pages, his expression gradually became serious.

"You should understand just by looking. This is the comparison summary between the warehouse item list and the actual inventory."

"You say inventory so easily....."

While saying that, Lloyd looked at the artificially illuminated storage shelves that gave a hallucination of stretching endlessly.

Checking all the inventories would normally take ten students from the Logistics Division a whole day to complete. At least it was not an amount for a single person to do.....

"I feel that recently the food supply in the item list does not match the actual inventory, so I lightly punished those Machina Division students that broke the warehouse lock and sneaked in. Then, as the purity of Mithril has also dropped, I have made a complaint to the Industrial Division."

Kanata nonchalantly responded.

It might sound like a matter of course, but the actual issue was not so simple.

The food supply in this warehouse provided for the whole city's residents. Six thousand people depended on it for their daily meals. Even an amateur like Lloyd could guess that stealing a little amount should not be noticeable.

"I didn't see any other personnel in charge of the warehouse, did you finish checking the entire inventory by yourself?"

"Huh? Why do you even ask such an obvious question? How can there be anyone that would help a traitor like me?"

"Sticking to being alone until this extent is also amazing. Since you verified this quantity of content alone with ease.....Speaking of which, there have been rumors about you helping the Logistics Division because you are preparing for division transfer. Are you aware?"

"No idea. Rather who would purposely help out half a year just for division transfer?"

"Kanata's behavior has always been hard for people to understand. More than half of what you do and accomplish are shocking, causing people to misunderstand. That personality of yours for not clearing up the misunderstandings is worse."

"Huh? What personality is worse?"

"Who knows, what indeed."

Not telling me about that incident for example. He wanted to blame him for how Yuri felt, but kept it in his heart after noticing that Kanata also had some thoughts.

"From what I can see, there are over 7000 items in the warehouse. There is no sane person that would do such an insane act of making an item list summary and managing all these by himself."

"No, I am perfectly sane."

"Then the *sane* Kanata is insane."

"You trying to pick a fight?"

"Hahaha, I'm just kidding. That aside, let's go eat dinner. Kanata will treat."

"Huh? Why do I have to treat you?"

"This is the price for having one of your only few friends search for you all the way here. It's only natural."

Part 2

The sudden appearance of humanity's nemesis — Magical Armoured Insects.

Records show that they suddenly appeared about four centuries ago, the source of their origin was undetermined to date, there was still no theory to explain why a creature that had undergone such a huge evolution like that could exist.

Just that against the Magical Armoured Insects, possessing supernatural powers named Curse, humanity's conventional weapons could not repel them and the one-sided slaughter continued before eventually losing their land. Also, not only did they slaughter, people killed by Magical Armoured Insects would have their memories robbed and erased from the people who knew them, such was a cruel yet benevolent method.

Then, born from the final power wrenched out from the humans who lost their land — Floating City — was the name of cities that floated in the sky. The land in the sky that humans survived in; the cities that combined magic and science.

The upper part contained the hollowed out city from the ground, and a huge dome covered the outer layer. Supporting such a city was a giant floating stone roughly cut into an inverse triangular shape and a enormous Toras made from Luna Titanite that continued to revolve slowly.

In addition to the surface facilities people live in, various types of

factories filled the underground, allowing people to carry out economic activities just like the time when they were on the ground.

And then the guardians of the sky exist in these cities.

Amongst the majority of population that would lose the memories of those killed by Magical Armoured Insects, they were the few existences who would remain aware of the dead. They were also born with magical power, allowing them to fight against Magical Armoured Insects with their own body. Roaming freely in the sky, humans born to exterminate humanity's nemesis, Magical Armoured Insects — Wizard. Protecting people from them, retaining the memories of their dead comrades, they were existences born to carry on their sadness. The Wizards who specialize in protecting the people were called Kuusen Madoushi, they were important treasures to all Floating Cities. However, their numbers were absolutely insufficient, hence humans created a Floating City with facilities specialized in nurturing Kuusen Madoushi.

Its name was — The Floating Academy City 「Mystogan」.

The special teaching facility for nurturing Kuusen Madoushi to fight against Magical Armoured Insects.

**

The morning sun that shone from the dome wall showered onto the badge pinned on the collar of a yawning Kanata, engraved with a symbol that resembled a long extinct wolf and the words 'S128'.

It was probably because of helping out the Logistics Division until late last night. The path from Kuusen Madoushi Division's Artemia Dorm to school that was not far felt longer than usual.

One month had passed since the new semester began. As the freshmen in the surroundings were more or less adapted to the environment, he was lazily strolling on the stone path lined with conifer trees. Just then, a silhouette came rushing forward from the other end of the turning road.

“Geh!”

“Eck!”

When he noticed, his vision was already obscured by the incoming silhouette. Then he was knocked back by the vigorous force with a *don!*, and his messy hair scraped the rough ground.

“That hurts.”

“Where the hell are you looking at when walking!?”

Kanata who was lying face up on the ground after being bounced away craned his neck to look foward while enduring the stinging pain. Before him, a girl with bright red long hair was in his sight.

“Where are you.....”

The red-haired girl was straddling him. Not to mention Kanata's hands just coincidentally pushed upwards from the place below her chest. He shifted his line of sight upwards a little. Their eyes met.

“.....W-Where indeed?”

“P-PPP-Pettanko.....y-you are going to say~!”

“Eh, no.....W-Well, if you put it that way.”

“L-Low life!”

“But, you are the one who said so.”

On top of being late in realizing where he was touching, the two mounds were still unnoticeable. However, as a guy he would still be conscious of it. Feeling awkward, Kanata tried to pull his hands away casually, but the red-haired girl shook them off forcefully.

“G-Get away from me!”

Kanata’s head was once again slammed onto the ground hard just when he got up. So unreasonable.

“Rather, where are you looking when walking!?”

The girl was shorter than Kanata as they both stood up, her uniform was also different from the sophomore Kanata’s. Probably a preparatory junior.

But, she was glaring with truculent eyes without any concern for seniority,

a spirited girl.

“The same applies to you as well, where are you looking when walking?”

Kanata who just got up rebutted while rubbing his head that was still tingling with pain. He felt something strange at his lower body, but the pain from the head took priority.

“S-Shut up! If you say that, then the one that was strolling casually near the turn is.....”

Glaring at him with sharp eyes, the red-haired girl would not let Kanata off.

However, for some unknown reason, the red-haired girl's sharp glare suddenly loosened, instantly losing her dominance, shock and confusion then began to show in her expression.

“.....W-Wait a moment, m-my toast just got ruined. A~ah, the strawberry jam side is facing down.....”

Shifting his eyes, just as the girl mentioned, a soft-looking toast was sticking onto his crotch area with the jam side.



“.....H-How will you take responsibility for it!?”

“Geh! Normally speaking, the one who smeared strawberry jam onto someone’s awkward place should take responsibility.”

“What?! You should be considerate to me who is anxious about being late for morning practice because I overslept. Return me my toast right now!”

“.....Who will be considerate about that? And also stop pointing at the delicate place. The surrounding people will see us with weird looks.”

“What delicate place?.....Uuuu!”

Her long bright red hair swayed in the air. The girl reflexively tilted her body back without thinking.

This was probably an obvious reaction. The toast that stuck onto Kanata’s crotch fell off just then, causing her to notice the red stain surrounding the zip of his pants.

“~~! What kind of nerve do you have! What are you planning to use such an obscene place to suck my toast.....”

This girl definitely did not hear what I said. She had switched into victim mode completely.

Handling this kind of person is too troublesome. The lazy Kanata gave

up sincerely explaining the misunderstanding to her. At this kind of time —

“S-Someone! There is a pervert here.....!”

The red-haired girl cried for help towards the surrounding passersby after regaining her composure. Though the girl asked for help from the surrounding, nobody came to help her. Just as the girl turned around feeling suspicious, only a toast was there lying on the ground, the young man had already disappeared.

**

“A~ah, the red stain remained after all.”

Kanata took off his pants at the washing bay built next to the wall of the Training Ground. While washing it, he was only in his trunks.

Just at that time he sensed someone's presence on the other side of the washing bay. Kanata was rendered speechless from what he saw.

She had beautiful black hair, a pair of shining obsidian pupils. She had an upright nose on her prim and proper face, with a captivating body line that was sensational even with her uniform on. As if a famous sculptor spent his whole life to craft this masterpiece of a human sculpture, anyone would be captivated by this goddess-like girl after seeing her.

Such a rare beauty was staring at her reflection intimately from the nearby dressing building window glass as if devouring it in a trance-like state.

She smiled as though overjoyed about her appearance. She closed in towards her reflection in the window glass to almost kissing distance while seemingly bewitched.

As Kanata witnessed this bizarre scenario, he thought that he absolutely would not want to have such a friend.

When the girl who could captivate anyone with her looks noticed Kanata's stare, she drew close to him herself —

“What? Are you fascinated by my beauty?”

“Not really, I did look at you, but I paid more attention to that weird act.”

“There is no need to refrain yourself at all. Being fascinated by my beauty is only a matter of course. Since a Goddess like me is always brimming with radiance.”

“Like I said, I didn't fall for you.”

“Is that so? Then it means, you are.....— stalker.”

“.....How did you come to that conclusion?”

As Kanata rebutted with amazement, he thought to himself ‘what a waste’ for this girl.

“You’re such a weirdo.....”

“Fuun, a mortal such as you being unable to comprehend my actions is only natural. I am a Goddess incarnate after all.”

That Goddess girl brushed her hair again like a rich family’s daughter.

A fragrant scent wafted through the wind towards him. With Kanata’s eye contact with her, she once again smiled.

“—I’m beautiful alright. But, please do not fall for me. Since the only one allowed to fall for me is myself after all.”

A beauty that could captivate any being. Leaving personality aside, Kanata’s heart skipped a beat from seeing her.

“Ah.....I say, if you have the time to indulge in your own beauty, you might as well use that time to do some training. That uniform, you are from Kuusen Madoushi preparatory course right?”

“Hng, I hate those things that make you sweat. Effort is something only for mortals.”

She brushed her hair once more.

“Fuun, I, the Goddess is beautiful today as well.”

She crossed her arms and closed her eyes as if drunk on her beauty, walked closer with that intelligent and elegant atmosphere.

“Don’t fall for me the Goddess.....— P-Pervert!”

As she was about to say the decisive words right before him, her voice trailed off into a shrill scream towards the end.

She had just noticed that Kanata was not wearing any pants, only in his trunks.

It seemed that due to the location being covered by the washing bay’s shadow, she did not see what Kanata was wearing on his lower half.

“M-My beauty may be otherworldly, but to take off your pants immediately is.....”

Rico showed a face of not knowing what to do without any disguise, her pretense before had completely collapsed. However, Kanata who did not mind having his lower half seen nonchalantly said.

“Nope, they were off right from the beginning.”

“I-If that’s not the case, t-then put your pants on first! This pervert!.....Anyone, anyone around! There is a p-pervert here!”

After that. As Rico started screaming at Kanata out of distress, Kanata

hurriedly grabbed his wet pants and fled the scene.

**

“What’s with today.....It’s as if someone is trying to set me up as a criminal.”

Kanata, who ran into the dressing building next to the Training Ground, sighed as he saw some red stains still remaining on his wet pants.

As he snuck through the facility’s opened window, it seemed like he had entered the toilet. He used the body that was constantly trained, as well as the unlimited potential of a human during an emergency to escape here.

“This is the worst. Not only once, but twice...”

But as the saying goes, *never two without three*. It could be said that his mood plummeted after meeting two weirdoes in a row today, his attention was unfocused. He still did not realize what place he had infiltrated into.

“Speaking of which there sure are many cubicles in this toilet.”

Still, it was lucky that he infiltrated the dressing building. There would be washing and drying machines designed to wash the Kuusen Protector in this facility. Kanata decided to head to those machines and wash his pants.

Kanata was walking towards the exit of this toilet full of white cleanliness. Just then, the third incident occurred.

“Umm.....”

The toilet door was opened, a blonde-haired, blue-eyed and white-skinned girl was walking towards Kanata.

“What is it this time?”

She probably just came from training. Towards this girl wrapped tightly with her inner suit, Kanata who was suffering from light gynophobia used a threatening tone. Since he already had two experiences on this ominous day, he suspected that any girl he would meet that day would be a troublesome character.

However, this blonde-haired, blue eyed girl seemed to be different from the eccentric girls he met, she seemed to be quite docile.

When she just met Kanata and made a quick eye contact, the girl shrank back from being overwhelmed by his attitude. Looking closer, the girl was much shorter than Kanata, and was looking up at his reaction with an almost crying expression.

“Nn? What is it?”

Although the saying mentioned about the third time, it seemed like this girl was quite normal. Kanata lowered his guard.

“.....Here, is not.”

The girl shifted her sight to the ground, moving only her lips.

“Nn? What is not?”

“.....As I said, this, umm.....Here.....is not.”

The girl moved her lips again, but the voice that came out was too small to hear clearly.

“.....So, here is not.”

The girl’s shoulders were trembling, as she was trying to convey her words on the verge of tears. She said some more things, but due to speaking while keeping her head lowered, Kanata was unable to hear them.

“Like I said, I can’t hear what you mean by here is not.”

He let out an irritated voice. Immediately, the fairy-like small body of the girl shrank further. She used her small and delicate hand to stretch her inner suit lower.

“.....Umm, so-sorry! This.....Here is.....is.....”

Kanata waited for the girl to return to normal impatiently. The only exit of this toilet was blocked by this girl, he could not leave even if he wanted to.

After a long silence. The girl seemed to made up her mind about something and raised her head to speak.

“.....Here is, the female toilet.....is.....a place for girls.”

After finishing her words, the blonde-haired, blue eyed girl looked at Kanata who was wearing just his trunks at his crotch and feeling awkward about the situation, her whole face reddened from embarrassment, timidly asked while looking up at him.

“Umm.....M-Maybe you are a pervert?”

With that, Kanata·Age's second year sophomore life began.

**

Floating Academy City 「Mystogan」.

The Wizards who were originally one out of ten in the Floating Cities took up over ninety percent of the population here, and the total population was six thousand. About ninety percent of the citizens were students, that was why the Wizards there were one out of ten in other cities held up to ninety percent in 「Mystogan」.

It was an Academy City that utilized a motto of student self-governance, including education for the three-year Preparatory course and the three-year Sophomore course, providing schooling for students aged from twelve to eighteen.

Due to the fierce battle with Magical Armoured Insects, thirty percent of the Wizards belonged to the Kuusen Madoushi Division, other divisions included the magical technology research division Alchemist, scientific invention-focused division the Machina and other divisions totalling of nine divisions, the head of each division along with the Academy overall-in-charge made up the council of ten that was the school's upper echelon.

Amongst the divisions, the Kuusen Madoushi Division not only held the fate of this city, it could even be said that they held the fate of the world. People held such expectations to them.

Picking out the potential seeds of Kuusen Madoushi from the floating cities all over the world and gathering them here to nurture them, their goal was to develop the future protectors of the world.

For those expectations they had been working hard everyday but.....

**

Kanata arrived at school late due to extra effort spent on cleaning his pants, the two people that were talking on the linoleum passageway turned their attention on him.

The two stopped their chatting and focused their attention on him, and for some reason a silent and nervous atmosphere was created between the two sides. One of them recognized Kanata, Kuusen Madoushi Division Sophomore first year girl — Yuri·Flostre turned a hostile stare at him.

“.....You are still as irresponsible as ever. The fourth period is almost starting.”

She purposely used a sarcastic voice to speak.

A tied-up deep blue hair, with crystal clear emerald eyes. Although she was not tall, her proper behavior gave people a high class rich lady impression. In truth, she was earnest and helpful, and received good evaluation from her peers, but she showed hostility towards Kanata here.

“Geh, it’s already this time.”

He scratched his head and replied nonchalantly. Even though the junior who once relied on and admired him was now full of enmity.

“You can’t even be punctual, so you are a traitor after all. While you are a student of Kuusen Madoushi Division, you always went to help the Logistic Division, you really do not belong in this school.”

“What is it, you are still holding a grudge on that incident?”

“No, I already stopped thinking about that. It is a waste of time to think about matters related to senpai.”

Though she said so from her mouth, there was not a day Yuri did not think about that incident. On the day of the decisive match to determine the strongest squadron in 「Mystogan」, Kanata was absent without reason. And after that, he did not participate in any squadron activities. As the Royal Guards they were respected by everyone, even when he was in the

position of betraying everyone's expectations, he did not care at all.

"You are still holding a grudge after all."

He lightly provoked. Despite Yuri desperately trying to suppress her feelings, it was still obvious to the eyes. Just when Yuri was about to rush towards Kanata.



“Hey hey Yuri. Don’t be so rash against Kanata.”

Chloe prevented the fight that almost broke out.

“I am not holding a grudge, nor being rash. I am only stating the facts.”

“See, this is what I call holding a grudge.”

As he commented, Yuri shot a glare full of hatred at Kanata again.

“Stop staring at me like that. You said that you stopped thinking about me just now.”

“.....Excuse me!”

Yuri walked away from the scene while clenching her fist tightly.

The captain of S128 Royal Guard nicknamed 「Nirvana」, a girl with long black hair tied into ponytail with a thin lavender ribbon — Chloe·Sevegny watched her leave and then showed an unhappy expression to Kanata.

“You should not speak like that. Yuri will get angry for sure.”

“She can get angrier though.....”

“? What do you mean?”

As Kanata sloppily commented, those words almost escaped Chloe's ears. She stood before him who was trying to walk off to the classroom, and made an eye contact without blinking.

"Yuri has always been poor at controlling her emotions. Letting her vent like this once in awhile is fine."

Kanata said so while scratching his head in annoyance.

"You are still using such barbaric words....."

"Yuri joined the squadron because she admired me, she probably has yet to overcome the shock. She even rejected other hopeful squadrons' invitation to join the D-rank 128 squadron at that time.....Nn, what's wrong Chloe?"

"Then say that from the start. Kanata has been hard to understand since the past, I even suspected whether you are purposely picking on Yuri....."

Chloe pouted and turned her head away in defiance. Then she switched to a serious expression, spoke with lowered eyes.

".....That incident — Is not telling Yuri really fine? For the sake of protecting me....."

"An injury due to mission, it only meant that I did not have enough strength to survive that without getting wounded."

Kanata expressed so with a carefree attitude. Then he continued nonchalantly.

“Be it the Kuusen Madoushi Division or Logistics Division, they have been giving their all for the sake of protecting the people in the city. Of course I also want to protect them with my own hands if possible.”

Showing a glimpse of fearless smile as if it was a matter of course, Kanata spoke so. Chloe could only smile wryly at his style.

“Even so, I still feel partly responsible. Hence, I have something good to tell Kanata.”

“.....Good things?”

“Umu. Kanata is helping out the Logistics Division now, but I feel that there is a more suitable role for Kanata.”

“You said some interesting words, huh? What more suitable role?”

“It’s still a secret. But promise me that you will go with me to the Kuusen Madoushi Division Head’s office during lunch break today.”

The fourth class bell rang right at that timing, the two of them hurriedly walked back to their classrooms.

The Kuusen Madoushi Division education included not only the common academic knowledge and specialized knowledge, but also the obligation to train their bodies, researching day and night to meet their expectations.

This was not limited to the Kuusen Madoushi Division, the freshmen of all divisions had their morning lessons mainly focused towards common academic knowledge, more specialized knowledge would be added as they advanced in years. Other than that, the afternoon was mainly focused field practices.

Many students were enjoying their lunch breaks at the learning building they often sparred in. Another large group of students were walking towards the cafeteria on the first floor of the school building, while Chloe was dragging a frowning Kanata by the sleeve and walking away.

“I hate this kind of stiff and suffocating place.”

“Just come along quietly. I won’t do anything suspicious.”

Soon they arrived before the Kuusen Madoushi Division Head’s office, Chloe knocked twice.

“Excuse me.”

Chloe entered the room after saying that, with Kanata following behind.

Inside the room, many Kuusen Madoushi Division related data and books

were stacked on top of the working desk. As for the person sitting at the other side of the desk, a head of black hair and a glamorous body that was obvious beneath her uniform, with a tear mole under her left eye, the girl who was the Kuusen Madoushi Division Head — Feron·Flamel's figure could be seen.

“So you are Kanata·Age. A traitor like you dares to show up before me so sloppily like this huh.”

Facing Feron's self-satisfying sarcastic words, Kanata replied normally with no change in expression.

“Not really, you are the one who called me here.....Not that I want to come though.”

“.....W-Well I didn't call you here for those small talks. Accept this letter of appointment.”

As her words ended, Kanata received the letter of appointment. The first page recorded the job title he would be posted to and its details, the second was the content page of those thick files on Feron's desk.

“Provisions and attendance roster? And grading form, etc.? Then my appointment is Kuusen Madoushi instructor.....Don't tell me you want me to be an instructor?”

Kanata frowned in irritation and involuntarily asked.

“That's right. Starting from this afternoon, you will be in charge of the field

practical time. Regarding this, your squadron leader also agreed.....The squadron you are in charge of is E601, that is the squadron formed from the leftovers of disbanded squadrons after teammate trading. Their grades are quite poor, and after one month since the ranking battle, they are currently holding ten loss streaks. That group of under-performers are even mocked as F-rank squadron. Although taking on this role may be tough, please use the school motto — 「Nurturing Kuusen Madoushi to fight Magical Armoured Insects with absolute power」 as guidance for their education. That's all.”

Hearing the content of the appointment, Kanata's expression turned even more cloudy.

“.....I as an instructor, huh. You do know that I had been ridiculed as hypocritical and flashy when I was in service. This job wouldn't suit me.”

With a face devoid of motivation, he sighed loudly and continued.

“Is this offer really a good choice?”

“.....And that's what he said.”

Ignoring the grumpy Kanata, Feron probed for Chloe's response. Chloe who showed a grave expression for some reason immediately started to persuade Kanata.

“It's true that you have been mocked as a hypocrite and flashy by others, but I know that you were always willing to look after your teammates.”

She showed an angelic smile while saying that. Kanata lost his grumpiness and asked back instead.

“Then for example?”

“For example finding Yuri who was a vanguard like you after training for some personal practices, or helping Lloyd out with the squadron duties.”

“But, there should be other outstanding Kuusen Madoushi instructors apart from me right?”

“Due to the ranking battle that has started for one month, the outstanding instructors are all very busy. Hence this task is given to the squadron that cannot participate in this year’s ranking battle after winning last year’s, to determine who will be the instructor.”

“Then it doesn’t have to be me. Go find Captain Chloe or Vice-captain Yuri.”

“Umm, as the Captain of the Royal Guard I am very busy, Yuri is poor at handling her emotions like you said, more importantly — from my perspective, I hope that Kanata will do it.”

“What do you mean by more importantly?”

“You are still desperately moving for the sake of the Kuusen Madoushi Division right? Lloyd had witnessed it before, I have also seen Kanata helping out the Logistics Division. Your actual objective is—”

“Ah, a~ah I get it. It can’t be helped. Let me take a look.”

Feron could not understand the conversation between those two and felt like being left out, it seemed that it was something only the two of them knew. Kanata then picked up the thick file of the member list to read through.

While reading, Kanata’s expression turned grave.

“What’s wrong Kanata? Is there any inconvenience?”

“No, let’s just say that it’s about myself.”

As if receiving some shock, Kanata took his eyes off the member list. Then he continued to browse through the other thick files silently.

E601 was not simply weak. It was extremely extremely weak.

Despite the new semester only started one month ago, they had ten lose streaks in the E-rank ranking battle.

Ranking battle was the mock battle between squadrons against imaginary Magical Armoured Insects, and they had a streak of ten loses in the lowest E-rank, if they were engaged by real Magical Armoured Insects, the possibility of returning safely was — minuscule.

He hugged the thick files of data, and then suddenly started walking out of

the office.

“—Where are you going all of a sudden? Kanata·Age?”

“Where you say, obviously it’s the E601 team room. Though I don’t have any motivation, I still became an instructor.....Well, whether I will continue or not will depend on the situation.”

He replied while his back was still facing them, then left the place without looking back. After confirming the door was closed, Feron could not help but ask.

“He is such an elusive and hard to understand person. Kanata was an ace that became popular for his show-offs, is it really fine to let such an egoistic person become an instructor?”

“It’s all right. Despite looking like that, Kanata has his own beliefs, and he would not leave the people in trouble alone.”

Then Chloe leaked out some of Kanata’s past in the name of childhood friend.

“The time we were still in 「Leon」 was when we were around seven years old, Kanata stayed with me who was struggling with flying magic until the very end. And he is not someone who acts sloppily in an aerial battle.”

“Well, since you say so, I will not say anymore. But, I still need to be responsible for this assignment as the Kuusen Madoushi Division Head.”

Putting aside Chloe who was full of confidence, letting that elusive and hard to understand Kanata become an instructor, Feron still felt a sense of uncertainty.

Part 3

“W-Why are you hereeee!”

The lesson after lunch break — Practical training.

Other divisions focused in activities regarding economics and productivity of the city, while the Kuusen Madoushi Division received the support of others and focused on training.

The Alchemist Division used the magic formulas created from the twenty-five rune symbols to produce Mithril armaments, Industrial Division students worked hard to produce food that were highly nutritious and high in productivity, all to support the Kuusen Madoushi Division.

The Kuusen Madoushi Division was just that important and held with much expectations at the same time.

Kanata walked towards the squadron building next to the main school building, passing by many Kuusen Madoushi Division students wearing protectors. The students were laughing while gossiping in groups, there was no trace of killing intent in the atmosphere, yet these students must learn the skills to fight against the humanity’s nemesis without any mercy.

For the sake of teaching those teenagers with bright futures, Kanata opened E601’s room door, only to be treated as a pervert immediately.

However, since Kanata had already seen their faces from the profile in the office, he was not so disturbed by the fact.

“My name is Kanata·Age. I will be your instructor from today. Kuusen Madoushi Division Sophomore second year, seventeen years old. Nice to meet you.”

“The pervert with strawberry jam on his crotch is actually an instructor!?”

“Fuu, that’s wrong. This man did not smear strawberry jam on his crotch. He took off his pants and tried to assault me at the washing bay, he must be in beast mode right now.”

“U-Umm.....I-I met with you before, in the female toilet.....”

The worst first impression. The girls before him were the three girls that had the worst first encounter with Kanata.

However, Kanata already knew this beforehand, so he was not shaken, and continued naturally.

“Well, don’t mind the details. Rather than that, do some self-introduction so we can move on.”

“What moving on!? You seriously plan to guide us, huh! You probably just want to become our instructor with perverted thoughts without checking through our data!”



The one saying those things with an overbearing attitude was the bright red long hair girl. Towards that girl, Kanata did not even look at the profile in his hands and replied in her face.

“So noisy, you are the strawberry jam one.....Misora·Whitale, right. Kuusen Madoushi Division Preparatory second year, fourteen years old. I briefly looked through your profile, last year’s year end academic result was D. Practical test result was E. As for vanguard trial result was, recommended to drop out voluntarily.....Are you properly training? Being the squadron leader with this kind of result.....Seriously?”

“Uu.....S-Shut up! My true power cannot be measured by practical tests! R-Really.....I’m saying it’s true!.....Wait, don’t look at me with that suspicious look. — Uu, don’t l-look at me like that!”

Being stared at by Kanata, Misora seemed to feel guilty yet offended, but still hung her head that was dyed red with embarrassment down in the end. She wanted to return the stare back at Kanata.....but could not.

Receiving an E grade in the practical test, it was same as fighting on par against a single small-type Magical Armoured Insect.

When Kanata wanted to probe deeper into the reason her ability was so poor, the flawless beauty interrupted.

“Fuu, Misora is just a small fry with that level of ability. A Goddess such as me is on a different world. Being silenced by this perverted exhibitionist is too shameful. A~ah, I should give my name first to be safe, my name is.....”

“I know. More like I won’t forget the name Rico·Flamel after seeing it once. Same as Misora in Kuusen Madoushi Division preparatory second year, fourteen years old. Academic grades are all A, ah no.....you were penalized for not submitting your homework, so it’s all A-. Practical result is F-, huh. Right, what does F-mean? Even someone with 134 lose streaks is still E.....”

“F-?.....A~ah, it’s about the practical test huh.”

After humming a small laughter through her nose, Rico stroked her hair like a rich family’s daughter.

“I was deciding my hairstyle that morning and missed the exam. In the first place, the evaluation from mere mortals is unable to measure the ability of a Goddess such as me.”

Kanata stared at Rico again, but she did not display any embarrassment like Misora. She seemed to firmly believe that a Goddess such as her could not be evaluated by humans.

“.....Wait Rico, do you know that guy also?”

“Sort of. But, not so familiar like Misora and others. Rather I don’t want to be any more familiar with him. This man is the guy that revealed his lower half to others early in the morning.”

She closed her eyes and hugged her arms, answered so rudely without even looking at Misora.

It was a squadron formed from the leftovers of various disbanded squadrons, like Rico said there wasn't much communication amongst them.

And finally, Kanata looked towards the blonde-haired, blue-eyed petite girl that was waiting at the side for her turn nervously.

"And the final one Lecty·Eisenach. You are also Kuusen Madoushi Division preparatory second year, fourteen years old.....Your results are also pitiful. Academic result is same level as Misora, after glancing through the practical test result, against the same opponent, you win sometimes and lose sometimes, very unstable. The only merit is your motive. In that case, did you purposely go easy during practical tests?"

"No, I could not improve my condition.....Umm, s-sorry!"

She did not dare to make eye contact with Kanata, Lecty kept bowing as would a little lamb being scared of a wolf. Furthermore, the momentum from the bow caused her head to bang on the table, she held the painful area with her hand, with a face that was about to cry.

The three each had their own troubles. Although without looking at practical training he could not determine their strength, but just the data alone he could understand why they were branded the F-rank squadron.

But Kanata decided not to rely on data for gauging their ability, he still decided to go with practical training.

"Now then, the self introduction is over, then everyone get into the sky

and begin practical training.....”

“—Wait a minute!”

Misora interrupted Kanata’s words unhappily.

“I won’t acknowledge you, the pervert, as our instructor!”

“But, didn’t I read through your profiles and even remembered them without looking?”

“You must be interested in o-o-our body, so you desperately memorized them!”

“I’m not interested in some kid’s body. And call me instructor or my name instead of *you*. I have a name called Kanata·Age.”

“~~~tsk!”

Misora pouted and wanted to chase Kanata away, but she could not come up with anything. As she was thinking of the words to say, she was distracted by another thought.

“.....Speaking of which, I heard about the name Kanata·Age somewhere before.”

After that Misora continued to mumble Kanata’s name a few times, then

suddenly stood up from her chair.

“—You, don’t tell me you are that traitor, Kanata·Age!”

“Umm.....Does Misora know him?”

Rico also seemed to notice something, only Lecty had no clue what was going on.

“It’s not the question of knowing or not! He is that Royal Guard S128 squadron’s Ace. Held the nickname 「Kuronos」, but was absent for all the special missions!”

“Fumu, I also heard that he was absent for the ranking battle that would determine his squadron’s promotion to S-rank, he was supposed to be part of the special team but he didn’t participate in any special mission. Seems like he had an accident in a mission, then became a coward.”

“Exactly. So, you the traitor, why did you come here to be our instructor now!?”

She pointed at him and mercilessly criticized. Originally this should not be allowed, as an instructor he should take a firm stand against her to maintain their student-teacher relationship, but.

“Go complain to the Kuusen Madoushi Division Head. She requested me to guide you people.”

He responded carefreely, Misora bit her teeth and stared at him hatefully with eyes that wanted to kill him.

“And, I am also interested in you girls.”

“It’s about us after all.....You must be looking at us with those eyes!”

“Nonsense. I said I’m not interested in kids.”

“Who is the one that did those perverted acts against a kid!?”

Kanata chose to ignore Misora’s criticism, and announced to the students seriously.

“You girls have never won in the E-rank ranking battle so far. The results until now are ten fights and ten losses. Such disastrous results, don’t you girls ever feel chagrined?”

“D-Don’t treat me like a fool!”

Towards the outright provocation, Misora’s group twisted their faces in anger. Unfortunately the three of them did not have the power to rebuke the provocation.....

“I did not treat you like a fool, I was only asking if you all felt chagrined. Did you really try hard enough?”

“Of course I felt chagrined. I wanted to become a Kuusen Madoushi as soon as possible, I was really anxious.....What’s with that comment! As if we didn’t try hard at all!”

“Umu, what you said was inappropriate. I am the existence that is praised as the Goddess incarnate since young. My ability won’t be lacking without making an effort like a mortal.”

“I-I’m also.....not making an effort, such a thing did not happen!”

Fuu, it’s rude to say I’m surprised, but these three do have the motivation to work hard.

He looked at Misora, Rico, Lecty, then told his students.

“I say, you girls should not be satisfied with your current self and want to get stronger right. Are you all prepared for the hardships along the way?”

“Of course. My target is Kuusen Madoushi — The protector of Floating City. Because protecting the lives of people is my duty, I will do my best to obtain the power to protect the people.”

“That so. Then it’s all good.”

Kanata’s cheek suddenly raised up in a confident smile. Misora who was staring at him was scared by it.

“W-What is good?”

“Since you all are motivated, then prepare to receive my training. Think about it, you girls defeating the squadrons who were stronger than you, the heroic figures fighting on the frontline against Magical Armoured Insects. By then nobody would be calling you girls the F-rank squadron.”

He spoke with a carefree tone, but his eyes were not smiling.

To find out if they have the determination, the room for growth, Kanata had to test Misora’s group first.

“But, guidance from a traitor like you.....”

“So what if I am a traitor? Or perhaps you girls want to use the guidance from a traitor as an excuse for failing to get stronger?”

“Of course not. Regardless of the instructor, to get strong, the person’s willpower is the most important. I won’t expect anything from your guidance!”

“However, Misora seems to be quite knowledgeable about my performance at the frontline back then.”

“That’s because I witnessed your activities a few times.....What about it?”

“In that case, for the sake of obtaining the strength similar to me back then, you don’t want to receive my guidance? You should know my ability.”

“L-Liar! Me having similar power as the 「Kuronos」 despite being a traitor now!.....No, liar liar! I won’t fall for such sweet words! You will say something like results depend on the individual for sure!”

“Eh!? You really don’t want? This may be the only chance in your life to get strong. Of course the training result would differ for people, but to give up without doing anything for this one limited chance here.....Isn’t it a waste?”

“B-But, to have the same strength as you.....”

Truthfully speaking — She desperately wanted it. *However the other party is a traitor, is trusting him easily like this fine?* Misora was hesitating. At that moment Kanata seemed to see through everything.

“A~ah, such a waste. If it’s me, I would definitely receive the guidance. Since just enduring the shame for a while will give me the chance to become stronger in exchange. As a Kuusen Madoushi Division student, what’s more as a future Kuusen Madoushi, you should be able to determine the pros and cons.”

Being exposed like that, Misora who held a fervent desire to become stronger caved in.

“.....If it’s just o-once, taking it is also fine!”

She was about to agree to let the traitor guide them. However, just at this timing.

“Even if Misora agrees, I disagree.”

“W-Wait a moment! Why do you object the decision from me who is the squadron leader?”

“Hmm, you are Rico. Why do you disagree?”

Rico began to stroke her hair like a rich family daughter again.

“Fuu, think about it. A mortal like Misora is one thing, why should a Goddess like me work hard and sweat so much? Sweating for training this kind of thing, is not something I should do. Fatigue is bad for my skin.”

“Ri-Ricoo~~! Y-You.....Enough is enough! Because of your attitude, we have never been able to show any results!”

“Fuu, it’s only you and Lecty that cannot show any result. You should be clear about my sniping skill. I am perfect in any kind of long-distance support.”

“Y-You will only shoot a few times when you are in a good mood, how is that perfect? Don’t speak about long-distance support until you shoot down the opponent first!”

“Yare yare, you can’t even do your vanguard role properly, how do you expect the long-distance sniping at the back to hit its target?”

“Grrrr —! You, come out to the corridor for a bit!”

“Hora, I came out for a bit.”

She pretended to stand from her seat, but only moved out half a step, Rico treated Misora like a little idiot. Misora was furious at this act, but Rico treated it as if nothing.

It was an atmosphere that the fight could break out anytime. Then, what would the last person here that was Lecty do at this time? Kanata stayed out of it and observed, Lecty seemed to be fidgeting from cowardice while sitting there.....is it. She seemed desperate to do something but her lack of courage prevented her from doing so. Kanata had no choice but to step in between their arguments.

“Nah Rico. Your practical test result is F-right?”

“So what about it? Practical test is something that is meaningless to me, so that result is obvious.”

Rico had already held absolute confidence in herself — although he did not know about goddess or something, he still pretended to be surprised about her goddess-like attitude.

“Eh, is that so? I have never seen your awesomeness once, like this I can only see you as someone below the level of Misora, is that fine?”

“You see me as lower than this thing.....”

Rico could not bear with it and argued while pointing at Misora. The phrase “below the level of Misora” echoed in her head.

“Y-You, we are in the same squadron, don’t use words like “this thing” towards your teammates!”

“That’s rude. I have the ability that is fitting of my beauty.”

“That said, I don’t know about this goddess or something, but since you never participated in a single human level test, it is same as being unable to determine your ability. Although you can use unknowns to deceive us, there isn’t any proof to your true ability right? You can say as much as you like.”

“I am not just boasting about it. I just hide my full strength on purpose, since I dislike sweating.”

“I see. —Then show me your true strength through my training.”

Being stared at by Kanata whose eyes suddenly became serious, Rico was at a loss what to do.

“Fumu, although I don’t want it.....I will show you my outstanding talent just this once.”

For the time being, she promised to receive the training from Kanata who was called a traitor.

As for the last, Kanata finally changed his attention to Lecty who was looking at the situation worriedly.

“Then the final one is Lecty. What are you going to do?”

“Umm.....you are asking if I want to participate in the t-training right?”

Lecty’s face turned red from anxiety and lowered her head again.

“Hey, Lecty. I told you to keep eye contact and use louder voice when talking!”

“.....Umm, s-sorry! *Gochin!*”

Being shouted at by Misora, Lecty nervously apologized and bowed, she knocked her head on the table again due to overusing her strength again. Trace of tears could be seen at the corner of Lecty’s eyes while rubbing her swollen forehead.

“Hmm? Lecty doesn’t want to join my training?”

“T-That’s not the case! Umm, the sorry I said just now was not towards Kanata-san, but towards Misora-san.....”

She still could not maintain eye contact with Kanata, and immediately lowered her head again.

“Hey, please say it clearly. Do you want to participate or not?”

Misora continued her question seriously. It was the same when arguing with Rico, Misora seemed to be the type that treat rules and discipline seriously.

“.....D-Doing! P-Please let me join Kanata-san’s training!”

Lecty, with her head still lowered, spoke up with a slightly louder voice than just now.

With that, Misora and her two other teammates decided to receive Kanata’s guidance.

**

The Floating Academy City 「Mystogan」 flew at the height of around 3000m. Any higher than that would cause severe strain on the Power Reactor so it was forbidden.

In the sky above 「Mystogan」 — Misora’s team could be seen in the Third Training Aerial Zone located 4000m above ground. They were not standing on land, neither were they using the power of any items. The three of them changed into their Protectors and hovered in the air. This is the necessary flying magic skill Kuusen Madoushi Division students must learn first.

The scenery around the girls were the endless blue sky and the cloud sea that could be seen far away, with the presence of other hardworking

students flying in the neighbouring aerial zones. Below them was the 「Mystogan」 they had just left. Although it was not as tiny as a bean, it still looked small.

“Speaking of which.....Why are you using a Broom?”

Misora in her Protector tilted her head and asked. Amongst the four hovering in the sky, only Kanata was using the black-colored surfboard-shaped tool processed from using floating stone.

The flying assist tool called Broom was used by freshmen for their flying magic training purpose, or originally used for long distance travel.

“Hmm? A~ah, I am more used to this.”

“You purposely don’t use flying magic, and instead use this flying assist tool with poor mobility.....Hah!.....Don’t tell me you are thinking that this level of training does not need to use flying magic!”

Misora criticized him with a thorny tone. However, Kanata did not mind it at all.

“There isn’t any kind of deep meaning. Well, considering the difference between you girls and my ability, honestly speaking I can still win without using flying magic.”

“~~!”

Grrrrrr. She was furious, but Misora still held it in and changed to the important subject.

“.....T-Then what kind training are we doing! It better be something that will really make us stronger!”

“A~ah, now that you mention it I have not announced what kind of training it is.....”

After being pointed out, Kanata scratched his head and announced nonchalantly.

“Today’s training is — Onigokko^[1]. ”

“““O-Onigokko.....!?”””

Misora and co. exclaimed at the same time.

Eh, that kind of training is fine? That kind of training will make me stronger?

Anyone would hold that kind of doubt. However, only Kanata remained aloof.

“? What’s with the surprise? You girls should have played it during Preparatory first year’s flying magic training.”

“N-Not that kind of meaning, why did the former ace purposely come here just to give that kind of low-level training?”

“Exactly. This is for the sake of testing my true ability, that kind of plebian training is just.....a joke.”

“Umm.....Please train us pro-properly!”

“I do plan to properly train you girls.....Un.....Ah! I forgot one thing.”

Towards Misora’s team that showed a relieved expression, Kanata announced with a confident look.

“You girls can use your Mithril Armaments and freely attack me, the training will end after you manage to knock me down.....Then the training will commence now.”

After his frank statement, the training began right after. Kanata immediately operated his Broom and left the place where Misora’s team was at.

Misora’s team did not know that Kanata’s Broom, nicknamed —「Black Hawk」, which was customized, had three times the speed of the normal Broom.....The girls that were ignorant of the matter recovered from their surprise soon after.

“Wa-Wait a moment! He didn’t listen to what others said at all!Ah-mou! Onigokko is a super beginner training, don’t tell me he actually didn’t plan to make us stronger? What the heck is he thinking!”

Misora complained as if she just remembered something, but Rico who was crossing her arms besides her seemed to guess Kanata’s intention

and leaked words of admiration.

“Fumu.....Maybe he isn’t just an idiot. That man maybe unexpectedly capable.”

“What do you mean? If it’s just flying, then anyone in Kuusen Madoushi Division can do it.”

“U-Umm.....Maybe, is this training supposed to improve our body’s basic stamina.....?”

Before Misora could deny, Lecty timidly continued her claim.

“.....I met the instructor this morning. Then he used an incredible leg strength and ran off somewhere. Maybe he was teaching us.....the importance of basic training?”

“.....”

Rico remained silent while showing a face of realization.

She could not deny that the encounter between Kanata and Misora also left her with a deep impression.

“.....It’s true that he is incredibly fast at running away.”

She reluctantly acknowledged this fact.

“But, allowing us to use our weapons, this means that he is looking down on us! Listen, the three of us have to work together and capture him immediately!”

Misora felt that she was humiliated, she adjusted the magic power at her feet for quick acceleration. Lecty followed suit after being instructed by Misora, only Rico remained still.

“? Why aren’t you moving?”

Misora felt strange and questioned her, Rico then brushed her hair like a high class lady and answered.

“Fuu, I am different from mortals like Misora, a Goddess like me does not need this kind of tiring practical training. I dislike this kind of activity that will make me sweat.”

“.....You, at least be more cooperative!”

“Fumu, cooperation that does not respect individual will is meaningless to me. Misora, do you truly understand the meaning of cooperation?”

“~~! I know already! Then I will just go catch him myself!”

Misora flipped out and flew straight towards the direction where Kanata went. As for Lecty whose existence was completely thrown out of her mind.

“Ah! W-Wait for me! Misora-san.”

She chased after Misora in a hurry.

Rico looked at Misora and Lecty that were moving further away with despised eyes.

“Such a fool. Chasing after someone who escaped without any plan——”

As if mocking this scene, Rico snorted.

**

“Un, they really are a squadron without any teamwork.”

Kanata who was levitating in the air showed a difficult expression, peeping at Misora’s team from far away.

Suddenly being informed of the commence of training, whether the squadron leader could organize the team was also one of the important facts to confirm. After a while Misora flew towards Kanata with cruising speed. She faced Kanata while reducing their distance.

“What is it. You think that you can capture me with just you alone?”

“That’s just what I thought when I decided to come here. You said that we can go out of sorcerer field and use our armaments to attack you. Don’t

blame me if you get injured.”

“Then it’s fine. I never planned to get hit by your attacks from the start.”

It sounded arrogant, but Kanata himself never thought that he could get hit by their attacks.

The attacks that came from the clumsy group of the F-rank squadron, even if he was the traitor, the former Ace of the S-rank squadron had no reason to get hit.

“~~! Y-You haven’t changed from your active period. You always show that arrogant attitude of being able to handle it yourself. Because of that, people criticize you as a show-off.”

“Fuu, you sure know a lot about me.”

“Pre-Prepare yourself! I won’t go easy or lose to someone who betrayed everyone’s expectation by being absent on the decisive match for S-rank promotion.”

It was understandable that she would despise Kanata for suddenly becoming their instructor. Kanata was unaffected by her hostility. He was used to such treatment.

“Here I come!”

Immediately after her declaration, Misora injected mana towards the

rune-engraved ring on her index finger — Madoushi's Magisphere. It reacted to the unique magic wave, then a giant sword appeared suddenly out of thin air.

“Silver-white.....Magic Cannon Sword, huh.”

Seeing this weapon, Kanata narrowed his eyes in interest. Although it was a magic sword, a revolver chamber was installed on the hilt, and a muzzle at the tip of the sword.

Kanata also used a giant sword with a cannon function in the past. However nobody used this kind of unbalanced weapon now and it was abandoned.

“Prepare yourself!”

Misora instantly closed the distance between Kanata, who was riding the Broom, and herself, she swung the white silver sword down with all her might.

The giant sword swung down like a log and generated a splendid wind pressure that brushed Kanata's cheek. However, he had already seen through the trajectory of the swing and lightly tilted his neck to dodge.

“What a pity! You almost got me there!”

Misora continued her sword arte. It felt as if the storm just went past him, Kanata's surroundings were enveloped by a raging sword pressure. However, in the midst of this hellish battle, a dubious look appeared on his

face as he thought of something.

“Mou, always running around! Hurry up and fall!”

Misora swung her giant sword with her full might like the storm. Kanata seemed to be absent-minded, but still used deft footwork to operate his Broom to dodge like an acrobat.

In this space with only an arm-length distance, the difference in ability as a Kuusen Madoushi between the two became obvious.

“Instead of swinging around violently like that, can’t you refine your swings?”

Misora’s sword arte was more like “smashing” instead of “slashing”. It took a long time to store power, causing the slash speed to be slow. Hence, it was not suited for guerrilla fight using flying magic in the sky, not to mention that the giant blade of magic cannon sword hindered the movement of Misora’s delicate body.

“Shut up! Just fall already, you traitor!”

Honestly speaking, he could not bear to see Misora’s rough magic sword arte.

However, Kanata was occupied in thought about another talent she possessed. To test whether his thoughts were true, he suddenly raised his Broom to max speed when Misora was not paying attention and pulled away.

“Wait! Don’t tell me you are running away! You are scared of me, huh!”

What Kanata displayed was commonly known as: Close Prevent. It was a tactic in which he accelerated in the same direction as his opponent, causing their relative speed difference to be zero, hence causing his opponent to be unable to close in. This meant — Misora would not be able to approach Kanata at all.

Regardless of the strength of the opponent, close-ranged weapon could not hit far away. Against Misora who wielded a Magic Cannon sword, this would be a fatal tactic.....or so it should.

But in the next instant, she already caught up to Kanata who used such a despicable tactic.

What occupied his line of sight was Misora. She was already within arm’s reach. She shortened the distance like a gallant horse cutting through the wind.

“I said just fall already!”

Continuing to dodge her sword fight, Kanata resumed his previous analysis on Misora.

Her speed that could rush over in an instant seemed like an illusion. At least that was not something a F-rank squadron’s member could achieve.

The speed of flying magic depended on the concept magic of realizing floating ability; Propulsion was gained by conversion of magic through

magic control; The sense of reading the wind direction and shifting the center of gravity. These three inborn factors were said to determine the flying speed. Just being physically strong alone did not mean faster flight speed.

Misora's flying magic acceleration from initial speed to max speed was overwhelmingly short. This caused the opponent to misjudge the distance in between which caused the illusion.

Then, what about the stamina?

Although her shoulders were heaving up and down to catch her breath, she still seemed to have plenty of stamina, her speed also did not drop.

“Then, can you keep up with this?”

Against Misora's pursuit, Kanata gradually increased his altitude to escape, then grasped the timing to sharply tilt the tail of his Broom upwards.

The upright Broom received a huge wall of air resistance, causing it to flip one round in the air. Kanata followed the flip, and instantly reversed the direction of advance.

She was chasing him in a straight line with high speed, as a result they crossed each other and she could not catch him.

Easily deceived by a feint huh.....

She had the speed and the stamina, but her skill was lacking.

Now then how about the remaining two? Kanata looked towards the direction where the two of them were, of course their figures were not there.

However, he could sense another person's presence nearby. Kanata immediately changed his direction after sensing the presence, and he could see Lecty who was looking up at him, timidly holding her magic twin swords at around her shoulder height, with the blade upright.

Despite her unnaturally timid expression, Kanata could not see any opening in her stance, as if she had built up an absolutely impenetrable air superiority zone.....

“Umm, Kanata-san.....”

“What is it? Come at me.”

“.....H-Here I come! Kanata-san!”

Kanata pulled out a dagger from thin air, and made up his mind to engage Lecty in close-range combat directly.

His reason for such judgement was Lecty's twin sword stance. Just that.

Being able to intimidate the opponent with stance alone had a high

possibility of having the actual ability to match it. However, Kanata showed a confused look.

“What are you doing?.....Don’t tell me you are going easy on me?”

“I did not do s-such a thing!”

Lecty’s continuous assault with her magic twin sword was somewhat strange. There was just something amiss.

She would sometimes use sharp thrusts that surprised Kanata, but at times move stiffly like the *gishi gishi, gasha gasha* movement of an old wind-up doll.

If those unnatural movements were removed, it would be a fluent movement like a butterfly dancing or a bee stinging. It would be like rehearsed dance steps performed on stage that reached the aesthetic territory of the sophisticated magic twin sword arte.

Kanata noticed those minor abnormalities. In the midst of the sword fight against Lecty. Kanata muttered.

“Oi, Lecty. This magic twin sword style, don’t tell me you are.....”

He looked at Lecty after his mutter, and Kanata met her line of sight.

Once that happened, Lecty’s face that was already a little red from embarrassment, dyed further red that would make people sympathize her

and lowered her head, her movement became extremely dull as a result.

“Nn? What happened?”

“U-Umm.....S-Sorry!”

While Kanata was wondering why she apologized, Lecty's power became weaker and weaker, to the point of fighting with her head lowered.

It became lacking in brilliance, her stiff movements worsened to the point it could not be called a magic twin sword style anymore.

He suddenly felt a sting on his back. Kanata turned around based on his sharp senses, he saw Rico in the faraway sky raising a sniper rifle-shaped magic gun towards him.

Then Rico aimed through the scope, and pulled the trigger.

The magic bullet mercilessly flew towards Kanata.

Kanata that grasped the situation at the last moment moved out of the bullet trajectory, but soon returned to the trajectory line.

Behind him was Lecty who had just noticed the magic bullet and was rooted on the spot from the shock.

“Tch!”

Kanata concentrated himself after clicking his tongue. He slashed apart the white magic bullet with his dagger at the right timing. It should not be easy to slash a bullet travelling at three hundred meters per second, but he did it effortlessly.

He utilized his inner magic power to enhance his dynamic vision and reaction speed, grasping the magic bullet's speed, and finally released the magic power that could negate the bullet.

“Kuh.....It didn’t hit huh.”

Rico muttered regretfully as she closed in. She did not release the second shot because she realized the difference in their power from the first shot.

“Your sniping is not bad at all. Just that your killing intent already made my skin tingle.”

Kanata added on.

“The sniping just now — You girls did not discuss it beforehand right?”

“.....Y-Yes! S-So.....scary!”

Kanata looked at Rico blandly after hearing that. But she just feigned ignorance.

“Different from the violent movements of Misora, Lecty’s movements were sophisticated. Then I just matched her movements and snipe. Such a degree is not difficult for a Goddess such as myself.”

“I say, you should treasure your teammate a bit more.”

Kanata released a long sigh. With that, he had grasped the strengths and weaknesses of the three girls. At that moment, Misora finally caught up.

“Uwa, Misora. You still have stamina left. I am already tired of being you girls’ opponent.”

“W-Why do you have that regretful look! I-I still have the energy to train until I catch you. I can prove that I am stronger than you right now!”

And then for some time, Kanata continued onigokko with them.

**

The changing room after training. After sweating out in the shower, Misora and the others were changing into their underwear.

“Ah mou, so pissed off! Why the three of us can’t even catch just him alone!”

Irritation prevented Misora from reaching the hook in the middle of her back. She could not wear her bra properly as well. Lecty was sensitive to the atmosphere and wore her underwear without any problem, then she

turned towards Misora.

“Umm.....Mi-Misora-san! I’m s-sorry for m-my lack of strength!”

She bowed deeply in apology. Misora came back to her senses.

“And umm.....the hook at your back, want me to help you?”

“T-Thanks. About the thing just now, L-Lecty is not at fault! Thinking about it now, I also failed to be more aware of my surrounding, and forget to give instruction to Lecty as well.....”

She honestly apologized for her mistake. That’s right. That was the attitude a squadron leader should have, just when Misora was about to regain her composure.

“Fumu. Just like Misora said, as a squadron leader, you still cannot grasp the whole situation properly.”

Getting her moment ruined, Misora stared at Rico hatefully. Rico was in the middle of changing, or rather, she had been bewitched by her figure in underwear from the mirror reflection just now, and had been admiring her figure since then.

“Fuu, the word beauty is — only meant for me.”

She leaked out her voice with a strong emotion. Although Rico was just a narcissist, Misora would sometimes get engrossed in seeing her figure and

even a little jealous, Rico's breasts were much bigger compared to hers, the top and bottom were well-proportioned, and very elastic.....

“Fumu, what’s the problem?”

“N-Nothing at all.....!”

“Fuu, it’s only natural for my breasts to be big and have a tall figure. The word beauty is only meant to describe me after all.”

“~~! N-Nobody asks you about that! B-Big breasts or something isn’t really important! R-Right, Lecty?”

“Eh? Umm.....I-Is that so?”

Then Misora turned her attention to Lecty. The short Lecty had a loli body yet her breasts were plump, making her the so-called oppai loli type.....

“L-Lies! W-W-Why does Lecty have bigger breasts than me!”

Misora despaired at the unexpected Lecty. To think that Lecty who was shorter than herself had bigger breasts than her.....At that moment Rico—

“Y-You don’t need to worry about that I think. Right Lecty?”

“Y-Yeah that’s right! The size of breasts does not determine everything!”

“Y-You girls!”

It was rare for Rico to give her a lifesaver, Misora had changed her opinion on Rico a little. Despite being foul-mouthed, Rico could still be considerate for others.

However, Rico’s words continued.

“Exactly. The size of breasts does not mean everything. Even if your breasts are not as plump as ours, even if Misora’s size is *kyu kyu kyu chirin*[2]. Right Lecty?”

“T-That’s right! Even if Misora-san’s breasts are *kyu kyu kyu chirin*.....”

Lecty just realized that she had misspoken, and anxiously covered her mouth.

“W-Wh-What have you made me say Rico-san!.....Mi-Misora-san, it’s not like that! I-I didn’t think about that kind of thing at all!”

Misora whose anger had already reached her peak could not listen to anything.

“U-Uuu! R-Rico! W-What kind of grudge do you have against me! You also didn’t cooperate with me for today’s onigokko!”

“Fuu, I do not acknowledge Misora as the squadron leader. In the first place, why must a Goddess such as me be under Misora?”

“That’s because I am the one who founded this squadron. You only joined

afterwards, it's only natural for me as the founder to be the squadron leader."

"Being at the front does not necessarily mean you must be respected. Take the school's senpai for example, it is the same as not using honorifics for those not worthy of respect."

"According to that reasoning, who have you used honorifics with.....?"

"Good for you to know. There does not exist any person in this world that is worthy for a Goddess like me to use honorifics."

"Excuse me, you need to use a little more common sense!"

"Fumu, Misora. You have been criticized for being empty-headed because you are blinded by the colored glasses of common sense."

Sizzle sizzle sizzle sizzle. The air between Misora and Rico became disturbed. Lecty timidly interrupted them.

"Mi-Misora-san! Rico-san! Please calm down!"

"Keep quiet for a while, Lecty. I will silence Rico's annoying mouth now!"

"That's right Lecty. Don't interfere this chance for this Goddess to eliminate the idiotic person."

“Y-Yes! Umm.....Sorry.”

Sizzle sizzle sizzle sizzle sizzle. The disturbance in the air thickened. The half-naked Misora charged at Rico with her full power, Rico dodged it, and the momentum from the charge caused Misora to slam onto the locker head first. Her anger rose further as she rubbed her forehead.....—

This squadron with just three members seemed to have a long way to go in teamwork.

[] [Main] []

1 Onigokko - A tag game whereby one or more people becomes the “Oni” (demon/ogre) and try to catch the others that are not Oni. ↵

2 Kyu kyu kyu chirin - Sound effect of small breasts. ↵

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Chapter 2 - Potential of the Weakest

Part 1

The Terra Garden during lunch break. The flowerbed and grass patch were neatly trimmed. Majority of the upper classmen had already occupied this place to enjoy their lunch. Sitting around the table under the parasol, Chloe and Yuri were discussing about their upcoming schedule.

“Then let’s end the practical training early today, and help out with the city security activities later, ok?”

“Un, that’s about all the tasks for today.”

After becoming Royal Guards, apart from the normal practical training, their off-campus activities had increased. This time, their plan was to cooperate with the city’s internal security police .

Most of the students in the Terra Garden casually took glances at where Chloe and Yuri sat, others blatantly focused their gazes upon them. Their gazes contained respect and reliance.

There were also female students squealing after making eye contact with them.

“.....What happened, Yuri?”

Yuri continued to add sugar cubes into her red tea to hide her embarrassment.

“No, how should I put it.....I still can't get used to this attention no matter how long it has been.”

Then she sipped from her cup of overly-sweetened red tea.

“Ahaha. It seems so, now that you mention it. We were still training hard at this time last year.”

Chloe was like that at first, but the large number of special missions made her so busy that she became used to it without realizing.

She could not afford to worry about Yuri much, but when Yuri pretended to speak like an adult, some childishness still remained.

By the way, she could not drink coffee as it was too bitter. She also could not drink red tea unless a mountain of sugar cubes was added.

“Speaking of which.....Is Kanata-senpai still in rehabilitation for his injury?”

She probably didn't realize it herself, Yuri would ask Chloe about Kanata every time they met.

Rehabilitation due to injury was the plan Chloe helped Kanata with as an excuse to be absent from special missions indefinitely. She had pleaded to the Kuusen Madoushi Division Head to look out for Kanata as well.

Although Chloe managed to deceive her each time, Yuri began doubting the truthfulness after a few months.

“Well, that’s how it is for the time being. Even though he cannot be on the field due to rehabilitation, he had become the instructor for an E-rank squadron yesterday.”

“Become an instructor? — Kanata-senpai!?”

“Un. That’s right. It was also my request.”

“I cannot agree to this! Why, that traitor! I thought that he did not participate in our squadron activities to help the Logistics division, but now he became an instructor!?

He was once known as an ace with absolute power.....It's true that I could not understand what he was thinking most of the time in the past, why is senpai always so selfish —”

“.....Yuri, please. Don’t criticize Kanata.”

Gently appeasing her, Chloe showed an angelic smile and looked around their surrounding.

Before her gaze, some students from Machina division were fervently discussing something. There were also economic division students chatting happily during their lunch break, and many other students enjoying their daily lives.

“Protecting the daily lives of these people here is the responsibility of us, the Kuusen Madoushi division. Kanata must also feel the same way.”

Seeing that smile, Yuri could only sip her extremely sweet red tea uncomfortably.

**

Afternoon practical training. E601 squadron room.

When Kanata entered the room, Misora's team of three had already been waiting for him inside.

“Heh, it's not even time yet and everyone is here already, you girls do have some merits.”

They focused their attention on Kanata who just casually strolled into the room. They still had a negative impression of the traitor Kanata at the same time yesterday, but today it was slightly different .

“Then from now on, it will be special training for each individual.....Nn, why are Misora's eyes sparkling like that?”

“N-No such thing! B-But, I do look forward to the special training a little.....”

Despite still saying some sulky things, Misora had gradually

acknowledged Kanata's abilities. She could no longer deny Kanata's ability as a former ace from yesterday's training, albeit deteriorated.

This was something others apart from Misora also experienced. Lecty timidly raised her line of sight.

“U-Umm.....I am happy to receive Kanata-san’s guidance!”

She looked at him with respect. Kanata felt somewhat troubled and scratched his head.

“I will say this first. The special training program is not going to be interesting. Special training is meant to be strict, not something fun that can make you stronger.”

Finishing his declaration, he paid attention to the last person — Rico's behavior. She was a problem student that always boasted about not wanting to do the tiresome trainings, her existence made people want to tsukkomi her “Why are you still staying in the Kuusen Madoushi division then?”.

Rico noticed Kanata's attention towards her and snorted before stroking her hair.

“Fuu, I have no intention of joining the special training. You should know by now, my sniping technique has already reached that of a goddess's realm.”

“W-Wait, Rico! No matter how much of a pervert he is, you can't say

those kind of things since he is still an instructor!"

"No, like I said I'm not a pervert."

Misora rebuked in a hurry. However, Rico's reaction was within Kanata's expectations.

"Well, your sniping sense and situational judgement ability are exceptional. At least you have the highest combat ability amongst the members."

"Fumu, you can praise me some more. Seems like you are not just an average person. Compared to the mortals around, you are able to understand a fragment of my talent."

Rico expressed her joy and confidence at being praised. However, Kanata was yet to be finished with his words.

"Apart from that, you were able to grasp the difference between your ability and mine, and judged that further sniping would only miss and stopped shooting altogether, right?"

His words were spot-on, Rico's elegant face showed an obvious twist.

"I already possess above average ability. There is no need for special training."

She said so and left after opening the door.

“W-Wait, Rico.....!”

“It’s fine, leave her alone.....”

“What ‘leave her alone’?! Rico not receiving training isn’t fine, right!?”

“Rather than worrying about others, you should worry about yourself now. Or do you think you have the time to worry about others?”

Kanata did not panic at all. Rico skipping on her training was within his expectations. However, rather than insisting that prideful girl to receive training, it would be better to focus on the remaining two people and raise the squadron’s overall combat ability.

After waiting for Misora and Lecty to calm down from the sudden events just now, Kanata asked.

“— Then, regarding the topic on special training, I will provide special training for you two individually, the condition is to continue it for a week, at least. Do you two have the resolve for it? You must be determined to do it even if it’s difficult.”

“” “”

Difficult.....Misora and Lecty immediately settled down. Kanata’s words seemed casual but had a mysterious weight in them. It was like the pressure released by someone who had been through much carnage.

“.....K-Kanata-san!”

She thought of something and suddenly stood up from her seat, nervously facing Kanata and looking up at him from above the neck area.

“What happened, are you that nervous?”

Getting questioned by him, Lecty timidly spoke.

“Stronger.....You are providing guidance to make us stronger than now right?”

“A~ah, that's what i intend to.....”

“T-Then, I'm f-fine! N-No matter what the training is, I will e-endure it through!”

Lecty's sincere attitude got through to Kanata immediately.

“.....I understand. Then I will brief Lecty about her special training later. No matter how rigorous the training may be, you must endure through it.”

“Y-Yes!”

Lecty bowed deeply after saying so, then returned to her seat and lowered her head shyly.

“So Misora, what about you?”

Misora was still a little hesitant after being looked at by Kanata.

“Y-You know already. I am also.....yes.”

As her reply was not decisive, Kanata reaffirmed her will.

“Are you really fine with it? Didn’t you treat me as an enemy?”

“I have yet to forgive your betrayal — betraying everyone’s expectations and being absent from the competitions without permission. I hate those kind of irresponsible people the most.”

After her complaints, Misora continued speaking. Although she was not used to seeing the serious Kanata.

“Even so, my magic cannon sword art could not reach you. So, for the sake of getting stronger, even though I do not acknowledge you the slightest, I will still use you to get stronger.”

Kanata smiled fearlessly.

“Heh, you two have already steeled your resolves, huh?”

And hence Misora and Lecty’s special trainings began.

**

Once afternoon came, with the Economic division students as the center, people involved in business activities became active.

The students were also in charge of the shopping district's operations. The academy discouraged acts that would create a rich-poor segregation, so the necessities were lightly taxed while the luxuries heavily so.

In there, Kanata and Lecty had a boutique tour in the shopping district at the city center. He made Lecty try on various kinds of clothes, and bought some goodies that she liked.

At first Lecty believed that this was a harsh training, so she continued to try on those clothes seriously. After reaching the fourth boutique, both Kanata's hands were already full of paper bags, she then started to get suspicious and made up her mind.

Lecty pulled aside the curtain of the dressing room after being forced to change into the deep blue coloured maid uniform, and questioned with her head lowered in embarrassment.

“U-Umm Kanata-san. C-Ca-Can I become s-strong like this?!”

Even though he was the one who chose such a cute uniform for her, Kanata was still surprised himself. How to put it.....it was so cute that such kind of fetish might be awakened.

“Un, maybe the bunny-san is more suitable than a maid uniform. Unlike Misora, Lecty’s style is good.”

Only after regaining his composure did Kanata judge if the clothes suited Lecty.

“Umm.....K-Kanata-san! Are you I-listening?”

“But well, there is still time to try on both sets.”

Saying so he instructed Lecty to change her uniform, and he bought both the maid uniform and bunny uniform in the fourth shop.

Then he asked Lecty to help carry some of the shopping bags, the two of them started to walk back in the direction towards the school building against the flow of students leisurely strolling.

She was getting even more confused about his intentions. What exactly did the special training mean? The serious Lecty had another matter of concern.



“Umm Kanata-san.....Is it fine to spend the precious fund for squadron activity like this?”

She looked at Kanata with insecure eyes shyly.

But he did not show any concern, and used the usual casual tone to reply.

“Nn? This is also a proper activity, is it no good?”

“.....N-No good I think?”

“No, it’s fine. It’s a proper activity after all.”

How exactly would this be a proper activity? The weight of the bags she was holding in both hands seemed to increase due to her guilty conscience.

“What are you planning after buying so many things?”

“Of course it’s to wear them. Lecty will wear all of them in school that is.”

“Heh, I will be wearing these in school.....N-No wayyy!”

The shopping bags almost fell out of Lecty’s hands.

“Why not? It’s alright, each of those clothes suit you.”

“I-It’s not about that! Umm, K-Kanata-san, uu.....I-If I wear those, I will be e-embarrassed.....”

“But while trying them on just now, you seemed to be rather happy.”

Kanata thought back on Lecty’s expressions. In the first shop, Lecty still showed a serious face, but after reaching the second and third shop, she had already revealed a normal teenage girl’s excitement in trying on various fashionable clothes.”

“B-But I didn’t think that I will be wearing those in front of everyone in school.....”

Despite Lecty’s explanation, Kanata ignored her and continued to walk into the dressing building, stopping right before the female dressing room.

“We have arrived. Then I will be waiting outside the dressing room, just pick one you like and change into it.”

“C-Changing into one that I like.....Umm, d-do I really have to change?.....Or rather, why must I do something like this?”

“Ah, I forgot to tell you, this is Lecty’s special training.”

“Eh!? T-This is my special training.....!”

“A~ah. Image change is Lecty’s special training program. Try to walk around the school building after changing.”

“T-That kind of training really.....Umm, make me stronger?”

This kind of behaviour would definitely attract attention, it would be an intense pressure to the easily-embarrassed Lecty.

The insecure, almost crying Lecty, with her hand guarding her chest, gave off “a small animal wanting to be protected” image to Kanata.

Facing such pure-hearted girl’s troubled appearance, Kanata’s tone also became gentler despite seemingly unaffected.

“Your Magic Twin Sword style come from Eisenach Magic Twin Sword Style founded by the Sword God Albert·Eisenach right? Letcy’s family name is also Eisenach after all.”

“Umm.....Do you know about my family?”

“I know a bit about Eisenach’s Magic Twin Sword Style. To use the Eisenach name outside, one must go through a certain amount of training to become strong enough for it. Even the heirs of the main family would be exiled from the family if they did not possess the matching aptitude, it was such a strict family rule.”

Lecty became quiet upon reaching this point. It seemed that Lecty held some sort of chagrin towards the Eisenach family name. Taking a glance at that reaction, Kanata then divulged in a low voice.

“In the onigokko yesterday, the best and the worst person is you.”

“That’s, what do you mean by that?”

“Your sword play is like slashing from Misora’s openings, if you had properly kept me in sight and used your full power at that time, you should have the skill to go against A-rank members.....”

Getting praised like that, Lecty was still confused. As expected, he had not finished speaking.

“However, you did not dare to make eye contact with me, and continued the fight timidly in the end. You could not use even one tenth of your full strength like that. Do you know why, Lecty?”

“Umm, I-I.....have s-stage fright!”

And then her words became stuttered, but Lecty continued to explain.

“In the past if I make eye contact with anyone, or in a place with many people looking, I will feel embarrassed suddenly.....And cannot move like how I want to.”

She had realized it herself, her weakness named stage fright.

Lecty had thought about curing herself a few times before. However, she did not know how. If it was so easy to cure then she would not be suffering so much.

Towards Lecty who was bowing in apology, Kanata gently stroked her bangs, but until it was a mess. Then he spoke confidently.

"Isn't that fine, not like it's a complex.....People that are unsatisfied about themselves are strong. That's exactly why we desperately try to change ourselves by working hard."

Lecty thought that she would anger him with naive words, timidly looking up after the sudden realization. Her expression was that of respect from the bottom of her heart after feeling moved by his words.

"Does Lecty want to change?"

".....I-I want to change! I want to change so that I will not be embarrassed in front of other people!"

"I see. Then walk around the school building in this dress. You can run away if you are scared, but if you give up like that my guidance will also end. So then do your best later!"

Leaving those words behind, Kanata left Lecty alone there.

However, once Kanata disappeared, she became anxious, and felt embarrassed.

".....B-But."

Lecty lowered her head while standing alone next to the three big paper

bags in front of the dressing room despite nobody around.

“.....it’s still e-embarrassing after all!”

**

Afternoon practical training time. Misora sighed while waiting with Kanata at the school gate.

“What exactly is this special training? Special training normally should be be at the Training Ground.”

There were unexpectedly many students after school. The Kuusen Madoushi Division had practical training everyday, but it was not so for other divisions. Kanata was scanning the stream of students going home for a familiar face.

“Here will be fine.”

After shopping with Lecty, he confirmed her presence in the school building. Kanata thought that it was about time for her to go home.....His expression lightened.

“Looks like the person we are waiting for has come.”

“Wait, t-that is Rico right.....!?”

Rico was going home alone with her bag in one hand. Kanata blended into the crowd and started following behind Rico. Misora naturally followed after Kanata, he then said something unexpected at that timing.

“Yes. Then your special training 「Tailing Rico」 begins.”

Tailing? Me tailing Rico? — That is.....s-special training!?

“.....Y-You serious!? What the heck are you thinking asking me to tail Rico!”

Misora raised her voice without thinking, but Kanata remained calm.

“Nn? I am always serious though.....”

“How would a serious person think of such a nonsensical special training! My dream is to become a Magic Cannon Blader.....”

Kanata suddenly made a move at that moment. He seemed to notice something amiss and hugged Misora up quickly to hide into the shade.

“Mu, I thought I heard Misora’s voice.”

At the same time, Rico turned around after hearing Misora’s angry voice, but was confused after not seeing her figure anywhere.

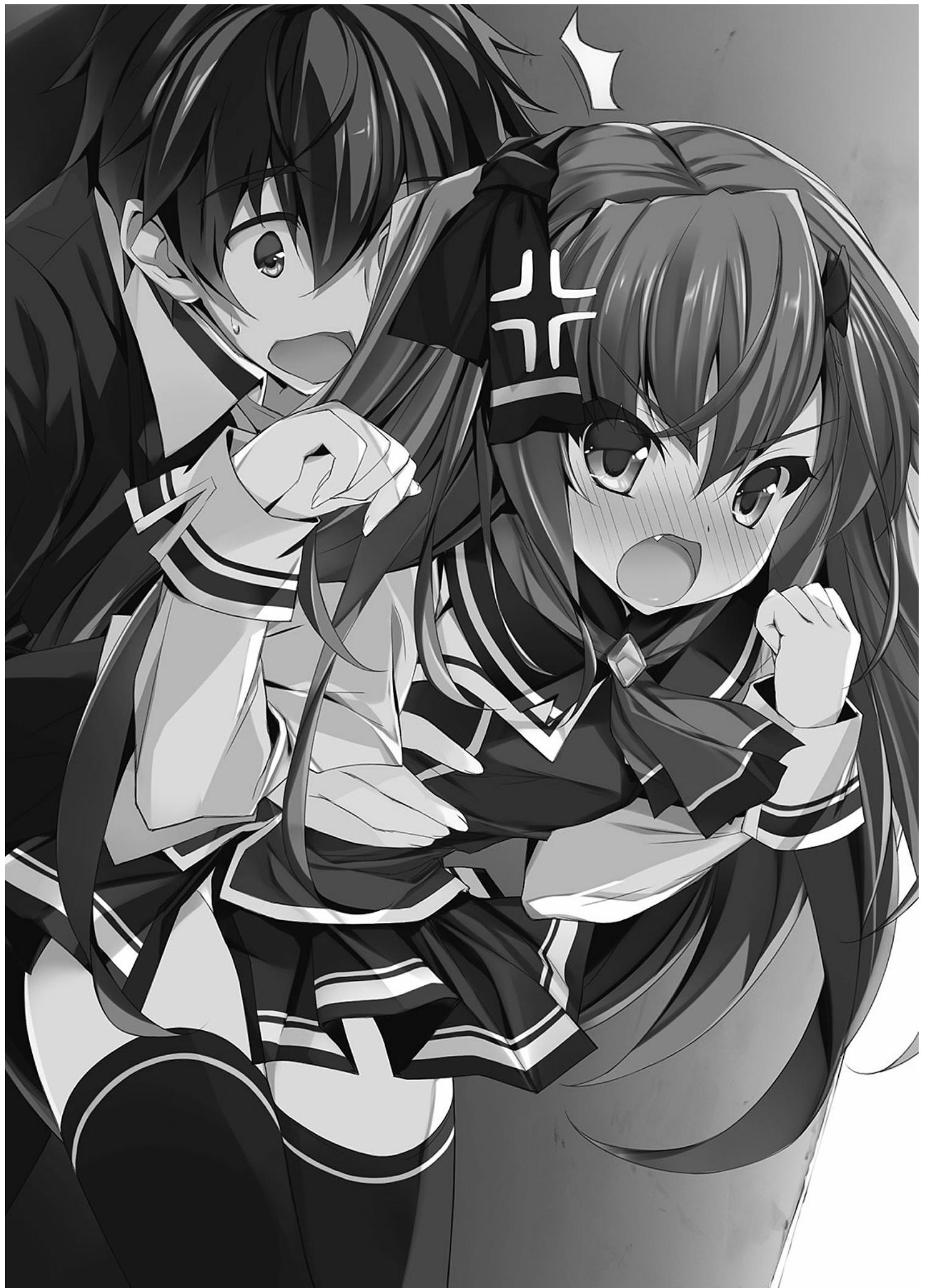
Kanata and Misora hid into the alley at the roadside that was barely wide enough for one person. They were squeezed together and unable to move.

“W-Wait what are you doing? Let go of me!”

“Shut up. Rico will notice you if I let you go now, and I can’t move like this as well.”

Misora’s face was right below Kanata’s face. Kanata was hugging from her back. Their hands and legs were entangled in a weird way.

“Hiya, w-wait you are touching — T-touching it.....”



For some reason Misora's face reddened and lowered her head, mumbled in a small voice.

"Touching? Where do you.....—!"

At that instant, Kanata noticed. Some sort of momentum made Kanata's left hand grope Misora's chest from behind, how to describe that touch.....A little bit of swell with some warmth and softness.....

"S-Sorry, I didn't n-notice....."

The rarely-flustered Kanata wanted to pull his hand out in the narrow space. Misora also tried to twisted her body away while still entangled.

".....Didn't notice!? What are you trying to say by didn't notice!"

"Yes yes, it's my bad, so don't struggle so violently in this narrow place. Not like I will be interested in a kid three years younger than me anyway."

After that they somehow pulled themselves out onto the road, and resumed tailing. Misora grumbled in a small voice.

"Kid!? What do you mean kid.....You don't have the right to call me kid after instructing me to stalk Rico as special training! You seem like a sex offender after all!"

"It's your freedom to think like that, I will only accompany you until here. The rest is your own responsibility....."

“! I won’t do such a criminal act!”

“Oi oi what kind of erotic things are you thinking. I am not asking you do something weird like a sex offender.”

Towards Misora’s hostile stare, Kanata showed a confident smile and said.

“You, go find out Rico’s weakness.”

Misora tilted her head in confusion.

“? Rico has a weakness?”

“Who knows.”

“Who knows...Oi!”

“However, humans always have one or two weaknesses. The cool looking Rico may have an unexpected weakness.”

Unable to comprehend Kanata’s intention, Misora raised her voice.

“Look here! What exactly are you planning to do with grasping the weakness you mentioned just now! Even if Rico is hard to get along, I won’t do something despicable like that to her.....”

“For the time being, just tail Rico today. There will be a continuation after that, you can just try your best to find out Rico’s weakness.”

After finishing his words with an *I will leave the rest to you* attitude, Kanata lightly tapped Misora’s shoulder and left the place.

**

Grasping Rico’s weakness. Although she did not know what purpose it was for, and thought that it was a pretty reckless method, Misora still stealthily followed after Rico who was gallantly walking down the shopping street.

Rico suddenly came to a stop from her strolling, then turned backwards. Misora noticed something was wrong and hurriedly hid behind a vending machine.

“What are you trying to do since just now, Misora?”

Rico walked towards her all of a sudden. It seemed that she had been discovered so soon that she didn’t have the chance to investigate.

“~~! W-Why did you notice! Y-You.....Don’t tell me you have some divine power!”

“.....Are you treating me like an idiot?”

Rico felt unhappy and questioned her sullenly.

"I'm not treating you like an idiot. Just that.....I was surprised when you discovered me.....How did you notice that I was tailing you?"

Haah, Rico sighed and revealed the answer with a *what to do with you* attitude.

"I have been continuously making left turns since just now. You also turned left with me for five times. Consider that there are three branches at the cross-roads, the probability for choosing left all five times is one out of two hundred forty three. This is no longer a coincidence."

Misora had no tailing sense in the first place, she was discovered since some time ago tailing her in an ambiguous distance.

Hence, Rico did not think that Misora was tailing her, but wondered why was she following behind her and not call out to her.....? She became alert for the possibility of some prank.

When she made up her mind to expose her, she did not feel any evil intent from Misora. Rather —

".....You are really smart."

Is this really Misora? Rico could not help but suspect, Misora was nicer than normal. Rico raised her vigilance for whatever she might be planning, then snorted in a good-humoured way.

“Fuu, it’s obvious since I am a Goddess.....So why are you following behind me?”

“That’s.....err.....Umm.....—”

“A~ah, you don’t need to say it. It’s Misora after all. You must have nothing to do with your free time.”

“Err.....W-Well. Something like that.....”

“Fuu, but unfortunately, a Goddess like me is busy unlike you. I still have things to buy. You should stop such nonsense and go home.”

She would really like to return, but tailing Rico was part of Misora’s special training.

“I-I say, Rico.....”

“What?”

“Can I tag along on your shopping trip.....Aww! W-Why did you pinch my face!?”

“No, I am just thinking that someone might be using illusion magic. At least the Misora I know has never been interested in my private life.”

So that's how she thought of me, Misora solemnly reflected.

On the other hand, Rico crossed hugged her arms in thought before opening her mouth.

“Fumu, well it’s fine. You can just follow after a Goddess like me.”

**

Misora accompanied Rico to visit a few specialty shop together later on, as a result she realized the difference in interests between the two of them.

“Ugh! You, you actually bought such a boring book?”

“Fuu, not being able to understand the fun of exploring the truth of the world, you are still a kid.”

She bought a few philosophy books that gave Misora a headache just by seeing it at the first book shop. Furthermore, she seemed to be in a good mood after buying those books, heading to the shop window to admire her reflection, and stroked her hair with a *Fuu, I am beautiful* look.

“Hang on Rico! You actually wear this kind of clothes.....”

“It’s just as you said Misora. My beauty will be paled no matter what clothes I wear. However, I can’t go around not wearing any.”

In the boutique shop next, Misora watched Rico try out the high quality dress that she could not hold up with her physique, and the shop attendant also praised her with sincerity. After that, Rico went in front of the mirror to admire her appearance, and stroked her hair with a *Fuu, I am beautiful* look.

“Uwa, look at this!? It’s super cute!”

“Fumu. This is so adorable.....Correction, academically interesting.”

They visited the doll shop last with Rico claiming academic interest as a reason, and bought a winged dragon doll that was designed with female taste in mind. She had a similar interest as Misora for loving cute things, but Rico stubbornly claimed it to be for academic interest.

She pretended to keep her cool, but Misora noticed her eyes going *sparkle sparkle*.

With that the trip would be over. *I still haven’t found out Rico’s secret*, Misora was anxious with such thought when Rico kicked the signboard for glasses specialty shop on the road.

“Glasses.....I hate it.”

“Eh?”

“It’s nothing.....”

“You, could it be that you hate glasses?”

“I said it’s nothing right. The perfect me don’t have any weakness.”

Since Rico did not want to talk about it then let it be. Thought why glasses.....? Misora withheld her question, but what she said next was more of a complaint than changing the topic.

“Haa.....Though I’m only saying it now, you are really an incomprehensible person.”

“Of course. The low level humans like Misora cannot understand a Goddess such as myself.....Are you treating me like an idiot?”

“No no, I’m reflecting on myself, not treating you like an idiot. I didn’t even try to know more about you.....”

“I’m not sure what you are saying, but I will excuse myself here. Time is limited. Time will flow by quickly if you don’t use it effectively.”

Rico quickly left after leaving some sort of epigram.

Then Misora who was left behind let alone finding out Rico’s secret, she had not learnt anything about Rico. She confronted this fact. *This means my training has failed huh*, she returned to school in disappointment.

“Uu.....M-Misora-zaan~” (Uu.....Misora-san)

Lecty was crying in the shadow of the cleaning tool crate in the corner of the classroom, Misora found her by her voice and hugged her. She started sobbing after then.

It was difficult to find her due to the hard to find hiding spot. For the part two of her special training, she needed to help Lecty.

“I say Lecty, it’s fine if you want to cry but.....Why are you making yourself standing out so much.....Why are you wearing a maid uniform?”

“T-This is.....*Gusun*, s-special training!”

“? What kind of special training needs to wear a maid uniform?”

“N-No! The special training is not about wearing maid uniforms.....It is to walk around in a maid uniform!”

“? Like I said what kind of special training is that?”

Lecty who was being questioned seemed to have gone through some hardship, then after idling a while as if she remembered something, she only wept *Uu, Misora-zaan~~!* without answering her question.

Although she did not know the details of the matter, Misora gently stroked Lecty’s head for the time being.

“Hey hey Lecty. Cheer up. Nobody is looking now.”

And then until Lecty stopped sobbing, Misora continued to comfort her gently.

Even though Lecty had never been accompanied like this before, she hugged Misora without reserve. After she slightly regained her calm.

“Hey you have calmed down a little. I don’t know what happened, if there is anything I can help just tell me.”

“Uu, Misora-san.....*Gusun*, will you r-really help me?”

“Well, only if it’s within my ability.....”

Misora had a bad feeling and spread out her defense line, but Lecty easily crossed over it. She took out some pure white clothes overflowing with cleanliness from the bloated paper bag.

“.....Wear t-this, and walk around the school with me together!”

“This is — What is this? Don’t tell me you want m-me to wear this nurse uniform and walk around!”

Against Misora’s accusing voice, Lecty nodded her head. It was already a desperate plea, the normal Lecty could not be seen already.

The normal Misora would strictly decline, but this time she gave it a deep thought. Since she had already said that she would help her, and Lecty looked like she was suffering a lot as well.

“Well, it can’t be helped since Lecty is really suffering. This time is special, I will also wear this to help you.”

The feeling of not being able to leave Lecty alone forced Misora to agree.

**

Chira chira chira chira chira^[1]. The glances from the students in the hallway hurt. Amongst them — There were those stares with indecent desires, there were also students pointing at them and whispering amongst themselves.

Haa, why must I do such things? Misora sighed as she walked down the hallway wearing a bunny girl cosplay with pathetic chest.

Lecty at her side had thought of running away from this situation countless times, but managed to suppress herself after seeing Misora helping with her special training in that appearance.

“Umm, M-Misora-san! P-Please don’t leave me a-alone!”

Lecty was using her watery pure eyes to plead her even now, Misora could not refuse.

It seemed that this was related to the special training from Kanata, but she could not get any more details out of Lecty’s mouth.

They continued to endure the weird and curious glances from the students for about thirty minutes. Then Kanata appeared when Misora was just about to be fed up about this.

“Hey you! What kind of special training are you making Lecty do! I don’t know the details, but Lecty was sobbing in the classroom you know!”

As she thought that she could not trust this guy after all, Misora criticized him along with the share from Lecty who did not dare to voice out her opinion.

“See, she’s suffering so much!”

Lecty could not endure her embarrassment any longer, she hid behind Misora’s back to avoid as much attention as possible, but Kanata just spoke lightly.

“Say Lecty. If you are suffering so much, want to end the special training? It won’t cause any trouble even if you stop here, you can end it if you want to.”

Then, Lecty who was hiding behind Misora’s back was about to nod her head silently.

Just at that timing, Kanata casually continued.

“But Lecty looks fine in that appearance no matter how I look at it, there is no need to be shy.”

Lecty forcefully stopped her head's movement before she was going to nod.

“W-Wait! Are you going to ignore m-my appearance!?”

“.....Well, that’s about all.”

“W-Who is ‘that’s about all’!”

After glancing at Lecty again, Kanata casually left behind some words before going away.

“Then, Misora. The rest is up to you.”

“W-Wait a minute! You are the one who caused Lecty to be in this state. Then you should take responsibility on your own!He’s already gone.”

Misora who was left behind thought that he was irresponsible after all, but stayed with Lecty again. Even though this was the content of her special training, Misora who couldn’t leave people in trouble alone comforted Lecty from the bottom of her heart.

“S-See Lecty. Don’t keep sobbing, cheer up. But why are you not wearing the uniform, and dress yourself in this cute appearance instead?”

Reacting to the word cute, Lecty felt a little bit happier. Her tear-swollen eyes still looked weak, but she properly said it.

“Uu.....I-It’s not like that! This is.....is special training! It’s special training!”

“? I don’t get it since just now, if you are so embarrassed why not stop? I can tell him for you.”

With that Lecty should be able to stop. Misora was sure about it, but Lecty seemed to refusing.

“.....I-I can still continue. Not only Kanata-san, even Misora-san also said that I’m cute. Kanata also said that I can become stronger.”

She stopped sobbing after saying so, and walked out from the curtain that was Misora’s back, becoming the subject of public attention herself. Her face completely red from the embarrassment, Lecty still endured her shame with shaky knees.

“Like I said how is this special training.....”

Misora grumbled while frowning.

**

“So, how is it Misora, today’s training result is?”

“It’s a big failure, though it’s frustrating....I finally realized how ignorant I was about the two of them.....”

Kanata asked her about the result of her training after school that day. It seemed that Misora did not stay in the dorm, so they could not walk back together. Lecty had sustained a big mental trauma, and went back to rest first.

“Rico could read the difficult philosophy books, but unexpectedly loves cute things, totally a big contrast.....Lecty is always serious and hardworking at everything she does, but I totally don’t understand why she is so easily embarrassed at all.....”

Misora gloomily looked down at her feet while walking.

At that time, Kanata strode towards the popular ice-cream stall, and replied while taking out his wallet.

“Is that so. That’s a good result.”

“I say.....I just mentioned that I was completely ignorant! Not a single positive point counts as a good result, are you trying to pick a fight with me.....Hyan!”

Kanata stuffed the soft cream into Misora’s mouth just when she raised her face full of anger. The sweetness spread out in her mouth, the cold extinguished her flame of anger. Kanata then blandly replied.

“This is the reward for working hard today. Is it delicious?”

“I’m not talking about this.....No, if it’s about whether this soft cream is delicious or not then of course it’s delicious.....But, I’m not talking about this.....”

Misora tiredly bent herself forward and answered.

“I didn’t get any result, how is it good. I even reflected on myself for not knowing about Rico and Lecty at all.”

“Nn? Like I said that’s a good result.”

What has he been saying since just now, Misora licked her soft cream while staring at Kanata.

“I don’t dare to let someone who doesn’t know me protect my back. Since you won’t know what can happen in the sky.”

He sensed Misora’s line of sight, and spoke while looking at the sky burning in dusk color. Misora suddenly exclaimed with anger mixed in her voice for some reason.

“Wait! What do you mean by that!”

“You already understand my meaning. Otherwise, you won’t be angry, right?”

Kanata asked back superficially, Misora could only make an *Uu* sound.

Just like he pointed out, Misora had realized that since just now. Rico and Lecty were the members of the same team she had to rely on when something happened in the sky.....However, they could not approve of one another and come to a mutual understanding.

“T-That I do feel ashamed for not trying to understand my comrades in the past.”

Misora hung her head down after finishing her words. Kanata on the other hand revealed a confident smile towards that girl.

“Then you lot should just eat lunch together, that way you have more chance to talk with them.”

Misora raised her head in surprise, Kanata continued nonchalantly.

“Then you pass today’s special training. You have sufficiently grasped the chance to make yourself stronger.”

These words blew away Misora’s hesitation, her expression changed into a gentle smile completely different from before.

“Then tomorrow is the real special training. Don’t forget the chance you grasped today. Your teammates are the people that you can really rely on when the time comes.”

“W-Wait up! What do you mean real training.....!?”

“Nn? I didn’t tell you? Today’s special training is the special training for you as a squadron leader. Tomorrow’s special training is something else.”

Saying so Kanata walked towards Artemia Dorm from the branch road. Misora only realized after he walked far away.

“~~! T-That kind of important thing you didn’t tell me at all!”

**

His second day as their instructor ended. Kanata was still reading a lot of data in the Artemia Dorm. They were all about Misora’s group.

“I say you, don’t just freely come in here. This is the male dorm.”

“Un, but the dorm supervisor will not discover if I come from the window, and only me and Lloyd will visit your room right. I mean the others all dislike you.”

“That said, rumor will spread if someone finds out. I hate it you know, rumors about me bringing a girl into the male dorm.....”

There was almost no place to stand in Kanata’s room that was messy from trash all over the place. It was probably because he had no roommate, Chloe would sometimes invade his room by using flying magic. They were both wearing uniforms, definitely not in a male-female relationship.

Members of the same team naturally preferred to stay in the same dorm, apart from Chloe, Lloyd and Yuri also stayed in Artemia Dorm.

“Well well, aren’t we teammates of the same team?”

Fufu as Chloe showed an angelic smile and pacified him, and asked about Misora’s group.

“So, how are you going to provide special training for that squadron leader girl? Have you found out the reason for her acceleration boost?”

“Un, actually, that girl’s magic power has exceeded A rank. It’s probably got to do with that.”

“Fuun, she is a talented girl huh.....But why is she in F-rank squadron?”

Chloe sitting on his bed almost dropped the cushion she was hugging in panic.

Magic power was the root of all magic art.^[2] That power was not something that could be increased easily through training, it had a lot to do with natural born talent. Hence it was not wrong to say that Misora had a natural talent.

“That’s about that. But then honestly speaking, she was just wasting her gift, her talent for magic art was lacking. Hence, I thought of making her convert to Magic Cannoneer but.”

“But, what?”

“After reading through her data, she seemed to be unusually obstinate on being a Magic Cannon Blader. Because normally speaking, she would have realized that she had no talent for being a Magic Blader after experiencing a hundred thirty-four consecutive losses. So she must have really wanted to be a Magic Cannon Blader.”

“Un, so does Kanata want to make that girl convert to Magic Cannoneer? Or do you not want to?”

“A~ah, about that —”

After hearing Kanata’s consideration, Chloe tilted her head with a *Uun*.

“.....It’s really something like Kanata would say, but you may be hated by that girl. Something like a traitor is a traitor after all.”

Chloe felt anxious, she tried to dissuade Kanata, but he smiled confidently and declared.

“If hating me can make her stronger, then it’s not a big deal at all.”

**

During the lunch break next day since Kanata’s special training. Misora as the squadron leader made her decision.

In this Kuusen Madoushi Division preparatory second year class C

classroom, Rico and Lecty who were invited by Misora had shown up. The three desks were joined in a triangle shape, they sat down facing one another with a basket on top of the desk.

“Un, thank you all for coming today.”

Misora spoke full of smiles upon her face. She had left a message indicating that she wanted to have lunch with them together under their desks early in the morning when she reached school.

“Fuun, I am the aloof Goddess, I dislike crowds. I have especially come here only because Misora has written her words of worship to me.”

“Un, thank you for making the trouble to come.”

Rico widened her eyes in shock.

“You have changed a little. I had thought that you will begin yelling again.....”

And then, Lecty bowed deeply towards Misora.

“Umm.....Misora-san. I also want to thank you for yesterday. I have managed to endure through the first day of special training hiding behind Misora-san’s shadow. Please look after me from now on as well.”

“It’s fine, not a big deal.....Sorry for not being able to help much yesterday.”

“I-It’s totally not like that! It’s only because Misora-san was there to accompany me that I managed to endure through yesterday.....”

“Muu, what happened yesterday?”

“Umm.....Misora-san was in nurse costume and walked around the hallway a few times. I was in maid uniform, it was really very embarrassing.....”

“.....Fumu, Misora wears that kind of costume huh.”

“H-Hey Rico! Why are you only staring at me!?”

“I didn’t know that you have that kind of special fetish.”

“N-No! T-That was due to some circumstances.....”

“So due to circumstances you became a nurse. It’s hard to comprehend a mortal’s way of thinking.”

“H-Hey! No matter what there is no way I would like to cosplay like that
_____”

“Fuu, it’s a joke. Misora and Lecty wearing those kinds of costumes, it’s something not normally possible.”

“Eh? Is that so.....”

Misora was confused, Rico snorted, Lecty tilted her head. *This is the first time I am casually chatting with these two*, Misora had thought. Although she had not grasped the whole situation, it did not feel bad.

However, as they did not know much about one another, therefore, they could not get enthusiastic into conversation. Eating quietly like this was not bad, but that would defeat the original purpose of this gathering, hence Misora slowly started to speak. The topic was a common Kuusen Madoushi Division matter.

“Speaking of which, why did you two want to become Kuusen Madoushi?”

“What, you want to know that?”

Fuu, Rico snorted.

“To prove my existence as the Goddess, there is a woman I must beat with my own hands. The woman sitting at the top of 「Mystogan」 is someone that I cannot acknowledge no matter what.”

Rico declared energetically with a vengeful feeling for some reason.

“I-I.....Umm, with the Magic Twin Sword I learned.....For the sake of protecting the people living in the Floating City I think.”

Lecty timidly revealed her clear objective.

“Then what is Misora-san’s reason?”

“Un, for me.....There is someone I don’t want to forget. In order for her not to be forgotten, I want to become the special Magic Cannon Blader in Kuusen Madoushi.”

Misora’s expression faintly became distant, as if looking at something far away.

“You say Magic Cannon Blader? I heard that that guy also used a Magic Cannon Sword during the ranking battle.....”

Comparing the person in her heart against that former ace traitor, Misora laughed bitterly.

“That guy is worlds apart from that person. She was much more responsible, I held the greatest respect and gratitude towards her in the whole world, someone that I definitely must not forget.”

However, Misora could hardly suppress her excitement, she could not wait to see what kind of special training she would get today. Receiving Kanata’s special training did not seem to be bad, at least that was what she thought for the time being.

**

The afternoon practical training. Misora who was called to a corner of the

training ground looked bored, she watched the students training themselves afar.

Students wielding weapons such as Magic Sword, Magic Gun, Magic Battleaxe were doing battle training.

The sound of metal clashing against metal. The rolling dust blown from the wind. The sharp howls of the students.

Such a scene was repeated every day in Kuusen Madoushi Division.

It was necessary for a squadron to use the sky for the 3D maneuver strategy training, but they would not neglect ground training. Without the burden of the constantly-operated flying magic, they could focus more on their battle skill practice.

Misora would not only train her Magic Cannon Sword during flight, she also practiced her swings on the ground. To meet her target number of swings, she would spend at least two hours a day making a huge number of swings. She had never missed this training everyday.

Right beside her, Kanata who was slightly late for their appointment appeared.

“Sorry. I took a bit longer to prepare, so I have come slightly late.”

As a traitor he was hated by the students in 「Mystogan」, but Misora slowly started view him with expectation unknowingly.

Kanata handed over the stuff he prepared to her without a speck of guilt.

“Then Misora. Your personal special training is — this.”

Saying so Kanata took out something from the empty space, a barrel longer than Magic Gun, a big cannon barrel-like armament — Magic Cannon Staff.

“W-What is this!?”

Misora showed an expression that was between confusion and troubled.

She observed Kanata carefully, and confirmed that there was something about it. Even so, he spoke with a normal tone.

“Nn? It’s a Magic Cannon Staff though.”

“I’m not talking about t-that.....”

“Your special training is to convert from Magic Cannon Blader to Magic Cannoneer. That way you will be stronger.”

Misora might have held too much expectation for him. Though he, being a traitor, had always said unexpected things, he was still a good guy. It might be because of that, she was displeased with what Kanata said — she felt that she was betrayed.

“.....Just now, what did you say?”

Misora spoke in a cold and bland tone. *This is my voice huh.* She suspected herself, it was a chilling voice. However, Kanata continued his peaceful facade, and told her.

“Nn, you didn’t hear me huh. You will convert from Magic Cannon Blader to Magic Cannoneer. Then you will use this and start shooting training is what I am saying.”

“.....”

“I have considered about it for quite a while, you should not be the vanguard Magic Cannon Blader, but go for the middle guard as a Magic Cannoneer with support fire. You are lacking in Magic Sword skills, but your flying magic acceleration speed and magic power can be considered as a natural talent. This is not something that can be achieved easily through training, so converting to Magic Cannoneer will allow you to utilize your talent much better.”

Saying so, Kanata began explaining the important factors for Magic Cannoneer training.

Misora did not look up since just now, her bright red long hair was like a veil hiding her expression.....

“.....That alone is absolutely impossible. Even if I get stronger, that alone I absolutely hate it!”

Misora still hung her head down and replied with an eerily quiet tone. However, Kanata purposely pretended not to hear it.

“Lecty also said that at first, but she still obediently continue her training today, stop saying such selfish things. Magic Cannon Sword is an unbalanced weapon hard for beginners and already outdated.”

The Magic Cannon Sword she cherished dearly was cruelly criticized by others.

Kanata became famous also because of using Magic Cannon Sword, he should have the same feeling as her, but she did not realize the contradiction.

Misora became more emotional than ever, she stared hatefully at Kanata as if he was her father's murderer.

“— I'm not saying selfish things! I have no intention of becoming anything other than Magic Cannon Blader! Even if you think that I have the talent to become a Magic Cannoneer, I absolutely won't!”

“However, you don't have any talent for the Magic Sword. Your personal record is hundred thirty-four consecutive loses.”

“Even so, I still want to become a Magic Cannon Blader! I don't want anything besides Magic Cannon Blader no matter what! I will work hard! I will put in effort to produce results, please let me continue to be a Magic Cannon Blader!”

Misora desperately pleaded. However, the word effort was easily discarded by Kanata, then he frankly spoke.

“You will continue to be weak now if you continue to maintain your effort. I don’t know how much effort you have put in, but doing the same thing now will only produce the same result.”

All my efforts until now have been completely denied. Misora thought. This guy did not know how much effort she had put in at all.

Even so.....He sounds as if he completely understand me, not even knowing the reason I want to become a Magic Cannon Blader, then making decisions for me selfishly.....the most despicable instructor.

“Don’t make such decisions without knowing anything! — I’m going back!”

She was already shouting by the time she realized.

Then she suddenly thrusted the Magic Cannon Staff back to Kanata, wiping the corner of her eyes with her hand on her face that became red for some reason, and left the place in big steps.

[] [Main] []

¹ Chira - sound effect of peeking secretly. ↵

² Magic power and magic art - 魔力值 or 魔力 is the magic power which is similar to MP. While 魔術 is the magic art which is similar to magic skill.

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Chapter 3 - The Red-haired Girl Conveying Her Resolve

Part 1

Centuries ago, the existence called Magical Armoured Insect suddenly appeared.

They robbed the land from humanity's ancestors, forcing people into the sky — the Floating Cities. This implied that the residents of the Floating Cities were descendants of the people that once lived on land.

After the sudden appearance of Magical Armoured Insects which robbed the people of their authority over the land, humans in the next few centuries, categorized into Wizards that held magical power and Naturals that did not have magic power, lived in the land floating in the sky.

My mother was an outstanding Magic Cannon Blader amongst the Kuusen Madoushi.....in the past.

I heard that the memory would be lost, but the memories of my mother was something special. For some unknown reason, the memories of people killed by those Magical Armoured Insects would be erased from the Naturals. Which meant, people without magic power would be totally unable to recognize people killed by Magical Armoured Insects.

Magical Armoured Insects had robbed the precious memories of my mother away.

I did not lose my memories because I am a Wizard, but my father could

not remember since he is a Natural. Although the family photo was displayed in the shop.....father still could not remember. The neighbours, the regulars in the shop as well — not any of the Naturals could remember.

However, only I remembered. That figure always showing her gentle smiling face.....

I will absolutely not forget about that person. And then I will make my father remember her again. People may ask how am I going to do it, but I don't know of any method!

I will become a splendid Magic Cannon Blader that won't lose to anyone some day.

I will become the Magic Cannon Blader just like my mother.

I will become a strong existence that will protect everything in this world.

Perhaps, seeing my splendid figure, someone may remember something.

The figure of my mother that lost her life to protect the city.

To achieve that goal, I have resolved myself to join the Kuusen Madoushi Division.

Extraction from Misora·Whitale's note. Exile Period Year 439 March
31st.

Part 2

The fifth day of practical training since Kanata became the instructor. On this day, the continuous disturbing situation finally reached its peak.

“Umm.....K-Kanata-san?”

Just Lecty alone sat on her seat, looked up while unable to focus her sight and timidly voiced out. Originally speaking, leaving aside Rico, Misora should have been here.

“What is it Lecty? Something happened?”

It was an abnormal situation, yet Kanata was acting normally. Lecty thought that she might be misunderstanding something, and meekly asked.

“Uhh.....You can say that one way or another.....”

Then she glanced at Misora’s seat.

“.....What happened to M-Misora-san?”

“Un, probably absent today. This makes it three times in a row.”

“Umm.....This definitely cannot be something trivial, how should I put it.....”

Lecty timidly told Kanata, not daring to make eye contact with him.

“.....I-I have been eating lunch together with Misora-san during lunch break recently. After lunch break ended, Misora-san would pick up her bag and go somewhere in a bad mood.”

That might be a clue to resolve the grave situation now, Lecty desperately said. However, Kanata’s reaction was.

“Fuun, so it’s that after all.”

He just lightly touched on it in a sentence easily. *Is it r-really fine to follow this person,* just when she was about to hold such a doubt.

“.....! When you said after all.....H-Have you guessed what it is already!?”

“Well, not to the point of guessing what it is.”

“I-Is that so.....”

Towards Lecty who was dejected after returning to the start point, Kanata told her after a while.

“Something like that. Misora being defiant is 100% my responsibility. Rather than guessing what it is, I can guarantee what it is.”

“.....T-That means it’s Kanata-san’s fault!”

She reprimanded him in a rare loud voice.

“Umm, Kanata-san really has the motivation for this right! ? Continuing this special training will really make us stronger right! ?”

“Who knows. Doesn’t that depend on your own effort to become stronger?”

“Depending on y-your own effort’.....K-Kanata-san, why are you saying something so irresponsible.....!”

When painful emotion floated on Lecty’s face, Kanata scratched the back of his head.

“Nn? A~ah, you meant that. Sorry sorry, I never told you, huh.”

Then he showed a fearless smile.

“Don’t show that about to cry face, Lecty. Becoming stronger truly depends on your own effort. Me as an instructor can only provide the chance for you to become stronger.”

“Chance.....is it?”

“Yes. It’s a chance. But if even after I provided the chance, you girls put in your effort and yet didn’t yield any results, then in that time it will be my responsibility.....So what will Lecty do? Continue your special training?”

The meaningful or meaningless mysterious training which had an unknown effect. Kanata mentioned that the lowest condition was to continue for a week but.

“Umm.....What does Kanata-san want to do today?”

Lecty asked back as she was unsure how to respond. She thought of deciding whether to continue based on his answer. She could not understand that this person was thinking at all.

Being asked that, Kanata crossed his arms and brainstormed as he answered.

“Un, I should be doing a home visit since Misora should have returned to her home by now. It would be very bad if she is really feeling unwell.”

Lecty could not make her judgement. Whether this instructor had motivation or not, whether he was gentle or not.....

**

“Un, this is the house.”

Kanata held a map in his hand as he arrived at Misora's real home in Suburb zone three.

According to the profile, Misora's father seemed to have obtained 「Mystogan」 Economic Division's special permission to open a café here.

Kanata knew that some parents worried about their children and secretly came to the Academy City, perhaps Misora's father was also one of that type.

Kuusen Madoushi Division students in 「Mystogan」 were basically forced to stay in dorms.

When Kanata entered the shop unified with chic color, he was welcomed by the bell hanging on the door. There were already some groups of students patronizing here, talking about the dishes while chatting.

“Welcome.”

Someone called out to Kanata inside the shop. A tough-looking skinhead middle-aged man glanced over from behind the counter seat.

“Sorry, I'm not here to eat.....”

Kanata was about to clarify when he reached the counter seat.

However, Misora who was dressed in the cafe's waitress attire bringing a

glass of ice water, shouted in a terrible voice before that.

“W-Why are you here!”

Towards Kanata who was being stared at by Misora, a voice came from the counter.

“Hey Misora, recently you have come back early to help out in the shop which is rare, but that’s not how you treat the customer.”

“Shut up! A father who doesn’t know anything just keep quiet!”

Although he was stared at a second time, Kanata still feigned ignorance nonchalantly.

“I’ve come here to see you, it seems that you are not sick nor injured.”

“You, saying that at this time! There is something else that you should say isn’t there!”

“Un, but that is what I want to say the most. I will be troubled if you are unwell.”

“.....~~Piki!”

However, relief did show upon his face. After confirming Misora was fine, Kanata felt relieved inside because it was his responsibility as her

instructor. Then he randomly asked.

“What about you, don’t you have something you should say to me?”

Misora wanted to shout at him whatever she had and distorted her expression, thinking that she might as well pour out all her complaints, but she was interrupted.

“Hey customer, do you know Misora?”

“Eh? Uncle is Misora’s father is it?.....There is no resemblance though?”

“Gahaha. My daughter resembles her mother.”

Resembles her mother. When the shop owner said those words, Misora’s expression obviously clouded. She became listless.

“.....I am going to change. I will work until here today.”

She disappeared to the back of the shop. Misora’s father also scratched his head seeing the discomfort.

“Sorry about that. My family doesn’t get along well.....”

Family not getting along well, huh. Echoing this sentence in his heart, Kanata noticed the photo decorated on the counter with his keen eyesight.

The photo was placed at an angle so that it could overlook the whole shop, inside the photo was the young Misora and Misora's father with probably her mother, the same bright red hair like Misora, a female Kuusen Madoushi carrying a Magic Cannon Sword.

"Uncle's wife is a beauty right? Misora does look like her mother."

Though his companion for life was praised, Misora's father did not show much delight.

"A~ah, it's about this photo huh."

Misora's father focused on the photo decoration.

"She did exist here. The photo is the only remaining memory though....."

He said so gloomily.

"Perhaps uncle is a Natural.....?"

"Yeah. My daughter is a Wizard, I am a Natural. And my wife was.....a Kuusen Madoushi.....A~ah, I spoke too much irrelevant things."

Wizards and Naturals. Those that had magic power and those that didn't.

The former could remember people killed by Magical Armoured Insects while the latter could not.

「Mystogan」 was a Wizard city. Different from the normal city, Wizards took up ninety percent of the population. As he noticed that this matter could be related to Misora's situation, Misora's father wiped away the water droplets collected on the cup and asked directly.

“Misora always trained like an idiot until late in the past, but she has been coming back early recently which was rare. I think that there is something happened in the school. Customer, do you know something?”

However, Kanata still nonchalantly spoke like usual.

“Hmm, can you tell me more about Misora? Why is that girl so insistent on the Magic Cannon Sword, including everything.”

Misora's father immediately stopped his hand wiping the cup.

“I need to ask customer before that. How are you related to my daughter?”

“Nn? I didn't tell you?”

Then Kanata looked at Misora's father's face and showed a confident smile.

“I am Misora's instructor. Providing a chance for Misora to become stronger is my job.”

Misora changed from her waitress dress into a Protector, and went towards the redevelopment area next to the cafe. There was a roughly fifty meter high dome wall made of anti-curse material.

Exposed steel frames, half-collapsed buildings littered around messily vandalized the scenery, such was the environment of Misora's personal training ground.

"Why can't I win!"

She swung down her white-silver Magic Cannon Sword with humiliation that had no place to vent accompanied by anger. Intense emotion flowed in her sword arte. It was reflected like trying to slash apart the empty sky.

Sweat dampened her bright red long hair which stuck onto her Protector.

"Why can't I win!"

How many times have I swung this sword already?.....No, thinking is useless. Expected. I will become stronger by the amount of effort I put in. Even so.

"Why can't I win!"

She somehow could not discard those idle thoughts. *Calm down, calm down.* Misora reminded herself as such. She had repeated swung this over

tens of thousands times before this. She could be proud that she had put in many times the effort compared to other students.

134 consecutive loses doesn't matter. Not being able to hit Kanata a single time during mock battle is the same.

“.....I won’t give up!”

Having no talent was only an excuse used by those that didn’t put in effort. Real talent could only be obtained by continuously working hard. Even if losing a hundred out of a hundred times in mock battles, it would be fine to win on the hundred and first round. What should be done for that sake? — Only by practice. However.

“.....Why am I not rewarded after putting in so much effort?”

A weak voice leaked out. Desperately suppressing the impulse to cry out, Misora bit her lip and continued training. Although this was a display of her will to resist to the end, some people would still feel sad seeing that.

“No matter how hard I work.....”

Kanata was also one of those who felt sad. He saw Misora’s figure at the location she used for self-practice that her father told him about, but he hesitated to speak up.

Misora fatally lacked the talent for Magic Sword. She was not tall enough to swing the big sword, her reflexes were also poor, such were Kanata’s thoughts.....*And I want to make her strong enough to survive the battle*

against Magical Armoured Insects.

"Kuh!"

A sudden pain ran through Misora's palm, her callus popped again. She almost dropped her Magic Cannon Sword, endured it in panic. Then she pressed her lips tightly and grinded her teeth.

"I can't admit defeat for my mother's sake!"

She raised her Magic Cannon Sword again, then swung down with all her might.

He heard about Misora's matter from her father.

**

"The reason Misora is so fixated on becoming a Magic Cannon Blader is so that she will not forget about her mother.

My wife was an excellent Magic Cannon Blader in the Floating City we had lived in.....probably. However, she never returned from a sortie on one day. Well, maybe from the moment my wife died in duty, my memories of our past and her existence also disappeared, Misora also seemed to faintly noticed the meaning.

The only thing my wife's comrades from Kuushi^[1] brought back was that white-silver Magic Cannon Sword. She never knew what her mother was thinking at the final moment before she entrusted it to her, however this Magic Cannon Sword is the remnant of her mother's last moment.

Misora admired her mother as a Kuushi since very little, she probably swore to become a Magic Cannon Blader obstinately.

Of course, my wife's grave has been shifted to the Hope of Hill in this City after migration, but nobody remembers her. Misora has since continued to pursue her mother's figure that even her father – me – forgot, to become a Magic Cannon Blader."

**

The reason, the spirit, the thoughts, whatever else behind Misora's obstinacy to become a Magic Cannon Blader —

Taking into account all of those, Kanata still believed that, in consideration of Misora, asking her to convert from Magic Cannon Blader to Magic Cannoneer was not wrong.

He understood just how intense Misora's thoughts were. Therefore, Misora must convey her resolve to become a Magic Cannon Blader with all her power to Kanata.

If not, she would remain stagnant. Kanata who just became her instructor would not be able to comprehend her, she would always be labelled as a member of the F-rank squadron.....—

"Oi, Misora."

“W-Why are you here!!”

“Do you have a moment?”

Forcibly taking her away, Kanata changed the location.

**

Spreading over one side of the gentle green hill, white crosses stood in memoration of students that died protecting the city. This place was called the Hope of Hill amongst students.

“It seems that you have come to this place everyday.....”

The figures of Kanata and Misora stood there. And the two of them were walking towards the cross of Misora’s mother. He roughly heard about the area from Misora’s father.

“So what! Aside from that, why did you ask my father about me!”

Walking next to Kanata, the things Misora had kept quiet until now were known to him, she felt that her privacy had been invaded like a worm in her stomach. Leaving aside Kanata, her father who selfishly told him also bore the same crime.

She had believed that he was not a bad person for a bit.....she now despised Kanata from the bottom of her heart.

“It’s not really your father’s fault. He is really worried about you.”

Even when having a serious talk, Kanata maintained his nonchalant mood.

The reason you are so obstinate on being a Magic Cannon Blader is because of your mother. This is the place your mother rests. So I think here is fine.”

Misora clamped her lips tightly, she must be glaring at Kanata. However, Kanata was not bothered by it.

“Hey Misora, I understand about your matter so just give up on becoming a Magic Cannon Blader. You won’t become stronger like this. So vow in front of your mother’s grave that you will give up on becoming a Magic Cannon Blader.....”

The moment he spoke those words insensitively.

Pashin.

Misora’s right hand merciless slapped Kanata’s cheek.

“— Don’t say it as if you know all about me!”

Hah hah, Misora’s shoulder heaved as she panted with her heartbeat disturbed, and she continued to glare at Kanata whose face was slapped. However, the one who was slapped remained calm as if he knew this would

happen.

“Even my biological father cannot remember my deceased mother. This bitterness, this sadness, can you understand!? The Magic Cannon Sword my mother used in the desperate battles as a Magic Cannon Blader, can you understand how valuable it is to me!?”



Kanata did not answer. — Because he knew that he could not answer.

“An irresponsible former ace would not know! About my deceased mother, my father forgetting about my mother in the true sense, those thoughts, along with the Magic Cannon Sword, had been passed onto me! What do you understand about me who is shouldering all those thoughts and desperately struggled!”

“Hey Misora.”

“What!”

Kanata took on her sharp glare squarely, not a single trace of his usual carefreeness could be felt on his serious face, then he returned Misora a glare that proved to be stronger than anyone. That was the glare from the ace at the top of 「Mystogan」.

“An outsider can also understand some things. Not the person that desperately struggled, but the outsider that watched objectively could see it. You have no talent in Magic Sword arte.”

He coldly announced. However, it was a cruel fact. This was something she herself understood.

Even so she would not give up. Because she would not give up.

“Like I said, even so I want to become —”

“But, there are also things that only a desperately struggling person can see.....”

Misora thought that he would stubbornly persuade her to convert to Magic Cannoneer was confused by Kanata's words. She believed that he would deny her thoughts for sure.

Therefore, she had never conveyed her thoughts towards Kanata in the past. She would leave immediately whenever she got angry and never once told him how she felt. Not once.....

“Hey, this place is given a wonderful name of Hope of Hill, but what do you think is hope to those who have died?”

Saying so, he looked around at the hill of crosses that surrounded them.

Each of those crosses encompassed the will of students that died before they could distinguish themselves.

“It should be to continue protecting the citizens of the city.”

“A~ah. Those who died while protecting the city from the threat of Magical Armoured Insects, while they hoped that they would not be forgotten, their feelings of wanting to protect the city even more drive them to fight on. To the dead, their hope would be to be able to protect their comrades living in the city.....That is the same for your mother. Your mother's goal was not to become a Magic Cannon Blader, but to protect the people living in the city

as a Kuusen Madoushi. What do you think of this?"

To become a Kuushi, or to become a Magic Cannon Blader. She believed that her mother would choose the former without a doubt. Becoming a Kuushi to protect the people living in the city was the goal, and Magic Cannon Blader was a method to reach that goal.

She understood her mother's thoughts very well. She had thought about it many times while putting herself in her shoes.

Even after thinking deeply about it, Misora still insisted.

"Even so — Even if I have to choose one, I cannot abandon the other choice. Perhaps people may mock me as being naive, but I don't want to give up on either choice. To become a Kuusen Madoushi, to become the Magic Cannon Blader amongst them.....

So I want to take on the share of my mother that nobody remembered, that feeling, in order not to forget my mother, set my goal as a Magic Cannon Blader! For the sake of protecting the people in this city!"

Speaking out for the first time, Misora felt that she had said selfish words selfishly.

My words surely would not reach this guy before me.

However, even if this feeling, the feeling of desperately moving towards my goal somehow, even if it could not reach Kanata, Misora still —

Absolutely won't give up. This feeling hidden in her chest would not bend.

That was why, Misora expressed her feeling without reserve to Kanata. The burning passion hidden in her small chest touched Kanata. He finally resolved himself, leaking a confident smile.

Then his pair of dark pupils that had a mysterious charm to suck people in looked at Misora.

"Understood. Then, I will provide you the chance to become stronger as a Magic Cannon Blader. So, pledge that you will desperately polish yourself at this place."

Misora doubted her ears for a moment and showed a blank face. Just by seeing Kanata's face, she could tell that those words were not spoken on the spot.

After hearing the story from Misora's father, he had already been considering the possibility.

He must test Misora's resolve even if he would be slapped.

What would come next would be the willpower to continue treading down the harsh path of a Kuushi.

"B-But, i-is it fine? You wanted me to convert to Magic Cannoneer....."

Facing Misora who was confused, Kanata clearly explained.

“Think carefully what I have said. At that time I said — Putting in the same effort like before will only remain weak as it is now. I never mentioned the direction of effort you know.....Well, you got angry thinking that I don’t know about your effort and left.”

Being pointed out, Misora shrunk her shoulders.

Kanata further clarified.

“You have inherited the trait of Wizard from your mother and continued to train yourself with normal basic training. So, of course it’s possible for you to become stronger as a Magic Cannon Blader.”

Partway through listening to those words, Misora’s gloomy face was about to brighten up again, but.

“However, you choose Magic Cannon Blader as your goal, this path is extremely difficult compared to choosing Magic Cannoneer as your goal.”

“.....Extremely difficult path.”

“Instead of a Magic Cannon Blader, I persuaded you to be a Magic Cannoneer, this is because as a Magic Cannoneer, you can better utilize your magic power capacity and movement speed to be active as a middle guard. You holding a sword without any talent for Magic Sword arte is a waste. That’s why, I thought of persuading you to become a Magic Cannoneer. Purely because it is easier to become stronger that way. Do

you understand the meaning of my words?"

".....U-Un. I understand what you mean, yeah."

Being fixated upon by Kanata's eyes emitting a serious glow, Misora somehow managed to give a positive reply. Hearing her insecure, but positive reply, Kanata's glare instantly softened.

"Then, simply pledging won't do. Pledge to your mother, you will become a Magic Cannon Blader stronger than your mother. Not just for the sake of protecting the people in the city, but also become stronger for the sake of protecting your own body."

"For the sake of protect my own body.....?"

"A~ah. If you choose to be a Magic Cannon Blader, the risk of dying during a mission is higher. Truthfully speaking it's not really my style.....However, I understand your feeling of wanting to choose this path no matter what. Because of that, I want you to pledge yourself. This is so that you will not die, as well as becoming an outstanding Kuusen Madoushi. Then I will pledge before your mother here that I will not let you die. And then as your instructor, I will carry half of your burden. So become stronger, Misora. Think about obtaining the strength to become strong enough not to lose to anyone."

Kanata was serious, She could tell just by seeing his eyes.

".....H-H-H-Hey!"

That was why she looked at Kanata full of excitement.

“— T-Thank you!”

She showed a shy smile while saying so. That was the most cheerful expression Kanata had ever seen until now.

**

While Kanata was desperately convincing Misora, on the other hand, in the school building —

“Eh.....? No, sorry. Thank you.”

“No, umm.....you’re welcome!”

In the hallway, the figure of a kind blonde youth expressed his thanks, and Lecty who was bowing shyly could be seen. Something must have happened. Rico who just passed by the area asked with a puzzled expression.

“Muu, what happened, Lecty?”

The Lecty Rico knew was someone so shy, that she would avoid talking to strangers as much as possible.....

“Ah, Rico-san. Actually someone dropped his student pass on the

hallway, I have been asking various people in the hallway, so that I can return it to the owner.....”

Saying so, suddenly realized something, Lecty’s face began to heat up, she fell into disorder and looked as if steam could blow out from her head.

“~~! RRR-Rico-san!”

“What is it? Why so panicked?”

“I-umm-I! For the first time since my birth, I talked to such a lot of strangers!”

That's right. On the way here, although she tried desperately for the sake of returning the dropped item to the owner, it was rare for the shy Lecty to keep talking to students she did not know.

“Au au, what should I do about gratitude! I ended up talking with him face to face!”

“No, I don’t think it’s the problem with gratitude.....”

“Umm.....Uhh.....”

Lecty was prodding her fingers together shyly in front of her chest looking embarrassed.

"When I was unsure h-how to start the conversation, voices such as 「You are the one who is doing cosplay in the school recently right?」 or 「Is there some sort of event?」 called out, although I was really panicking, I still answered them with my u-utmost effort.....!"

It seemed that Lecty used her normal unusual dress as the topic to start the conversation with a variety of people, finally found out the place where the owner of the student pass was at. And she seemed to be deeply moved by that.

"I was nervous when talking to people, but we gradually become more excited as the conversation continues, then eventually even I become happy.....It's really fun to talk to people you don't know for the first time!"

She became silent after saying so. She began thinking about how it became like this. Though it was urgent, the trigger for Lecty who was not good with eye contact to go out of her way and take initiative to speak to strangers was.....

"R-Rico-san. M-Maybe I just received an incredible training.....!"

What came to her mind was that cosplay special training Kanata gave her which had unknown effects. The usually obedient Lecty got unusually excited, she was holding her hands before her chest looking like she was going to jump from the momentum anytime even now.

"Fuu, looks like you received some interesting special training. Not forcing me to participate in those sweaty trainings as well.....Looks like this instructor has some praiseworthy aspect."

Rico showed a somewhat daring smile as she said so.

[] [Main] []

1 Kuushi - An abbreviated term for Kuusen Madoushi. ↵

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Chapter 4 - The key to victory lies in her single strike

Part 1

It happened in the Artemia Dorm on the ninth day Kanata became an instructor.

On top of the stairs was the floor of shared space between the male dorm on the right and female dorm on the left. In this five storeys high wide space, Kanata occupied a three-man sofa alone while datas stacked on the nearby table.

“You should choose the place even if you are hated by everyone. It will cause inconvenience to others here.”

Lloyd was late to realize the situation, but still reminded him with a half amazed look.

“Nn, the surrounding expressly moved away so isn’t it fine?”

“I can only take my hat off to such attitude of Kanata.”

“? Why would you take your hat off to me?”

“Saying it’s a good thing that people around you keep their distances should mean that you are living quite a lonely life, but Kanata made it sound like a positive speech.”

“Is that so? Is my life quite lonely?”

“Let me point out for you if you haven’t realized. Getting treated as a traitor amongst the Academy City, it’s not a matter of just being rare.”

“Heh, that’s so huh. Well, it doesn’t matter to me right now.”

Cleaning up his messy room was a waste of time to him. Nobody approached Kanata as he was treated as a traitor by the surrounding, making his isolation seemed like he was evil. What’s more Kanata himself really did not mind at all.

“Please excuse me for interrupting, Lloyd senpai. May I join in the conversation?”

Spotting him with her sharp eyesight, Yuri closed in and interrupted with a thorny tone.

“Speaking of which, the ranking battle for the squadron senpai is in charge of as their instructor has been decided to be next week. Their opponents is the squadron that looks promising to be promoted to D-rank.”

“Something like that.”

Kanata stared at the data of his squadron members and replied coldly.

Nobody knew that since the opponent matching was posted on the bulletin board in school, he had been thinking about the way to win overnight last night.

“Then is there any winning chance for that F-rank squadron? Or are you going to run away with some excuse? Kanata senpai has become a mere coward ever since that incident after all.”

Her words only contained her despise to the traitor. Shifting his sight away from the data, Kanata looked up at Yuri.

“Nn, Yuri. You think that E-601 squadron has no chance of winning right?

“Of course. Not only were they weak, with the irresponsible senpai joining, there is no way for them to become stronger.”

“I see. That makes it convenient for me.”

Towards Kanata who showed a confident smile, Yuri revealed confusion.

“Convenient? W-What do you mean?”

Kanata who shifted his eyes away from the data used that pair of dark pupil which could suck people in, to focus on Yuri.

“Anybody would think that it’s obvious who would lose. Not to mention the opponent is the squadron that looks promising to be promoted to D-rank. The opponent will win no matter how you look at it. That’s why we won’t have any loss even if we lose. Hence, they can be relaxed and fight the way they want to.”

“That means.....You are saying it's only a matter of course for them to lose!”

“Not really. The element to winning increased. That's all it is.”

His face is still the same as the time when he was called the Ace, Yuri thought so in a corner of her heart.

Like the time when he was called the 「Kronos」 who would not give up no matter how disadvantageous the situation was, that confident face she had not seen ever since that day of betrayal.

“At least I hope that you are not just saying empty words.”

Throwing the sarcastic words at him, Yuri left the place while taking a miserable glance at Kanata.

“Lloyd, can you?”

“You mean you want me to check if Yuri is throwing a tantrum huh. If you are aiming for that, then you are a really bad guy.”

Lloyd did not know the truth behind Kanata's betrayal like Yuri. However, seeing how he still went to check on her, it could be seen that he still trusted Kanata.

Part 2

The shooting range established at a corner of the Training Ground. Aiming at the targets moving on the 100 meter lane, Misora gripped the sword guard of her Magic Cannon Sword tightly. The released magic cannon shot hit the rock far away, smashing it to pieces.

“Wanting to hit a moving target from the start, didn’t I tell you that with your current shooting sense you won’t hit for sure?”

The second day of Misora’s personal special training. Two days counting from the day he persuaded her. To Misora who continued to aim at the target fiercely, Kanata who was inspecting behind said with a fed up tone. After missing her magic cannon shot many times, even Misora lost her motivation.

“About time you are convinced.”

“.....U-Un.”

Kanata said as he watched Misora who slumped her shoulders.

“Don’t feel so depressed. I already know that you have no sense for it from the start.”

“Uu.....B-But I feel that I would be able to hit it!”

At first, the highly motivated Misora ignored Kanata's attempt to stop her. As a result of stubbornly going for the high level training, it ended up being a wasted effort. Although she believed that Kanata's words on that Hope of Hill were not lies, Misora could not hide her insecurity.

The first day of personal special training was classroom lecture. He started with the fundamental knowledge of Magic Cannon shooting that Misora had no interest in and didn't care about first, but the result was bad.

Regarding the fundamental knowledge of trajectory line in shooting category, Kanata tried to explain it as simplistic as possible in a way that even a child could understand, but she just muddled through, in the end falling asleep from the fatigue of the day's training.

As it was a one-to-one lesson, Kanata mercilessly did a forehead flick on the spot. The disheartened Misora wanted to maintain her cheap pride and argued that she properly listened so stop hitting her, but shrunk down when she could not answer Kanata's harsh questions.

Misora asked somewhat anxiously.

“H-Hey.....Tell me, do you seriously think that I can get stronger by using Magic Cannon Sword like this?”

Of course, she would not stop even if he told her to stop.

She just wanted to reconfirm whether she could become stronger. The

carefree figure of Kanata whose thoughts could not be understood by others caused her to feel ambiguously insecure.

“A~ah, there’s no problem. It is no different from the shooting specialized middle guard role you are playing. Just that the shooting correction is slightly different from a Magic Cannon Staff, a Magic Cannon Sword is harder to handle, so you are going to thoroughly train on it.....Hey, there is a fixed target over there right?”

Kanata walked closer to Misora, pointing at the target 200 meters away. Misora immediately aimed there, but.

“Just your skills now cannot hit a target from that distance. First look through the scope.”

“Why must I use a scope.....Ouch!”

“If you rebuke again, you will get a stronger forehead flick. Stop complaining and do it.”

It was originally not an option for Magic Cannon Sword, but Kanata went to the Alchemist Division and got one specially installed onto it.

Tucking in her right elbow while supporting the long and big sword with her left hand, adjusted her aiming by following his instruction, the small target from afar was fully captured in her scope.

“I can aim properly now, you see?”

“Well that’s because you aren’t moving, there is supposed to be hand movement and various other corrections needed to be done.....Then just move forward like that.”

After confirming that there were no other students using the shooting range, Kanata and Misora crossed the shooting booth, entering the center of the shooting range. And then, *probably this distance*, Kanata judged so and stopped walking.

“Take your aim again.”

“Un, it became big enough that it can’t fit inside the scope.”

Aiming through the scope again, the target became so big that only a part was shown. It was hard to tell which part it was.

“Yes. Pulling the trigger at this distance is the basics. A beginner doing a high leveled practise is out of the question, so for the time being remember this and.....positioning to the back of the target is the cornerstone of aerial battle. You don’t have to think too hard, just focus on these for now.”

“B-But, won’t everyone with shooting specialized armaments be able to do such obvious things?”

“Something like that. But you can’t do it right? Being able to do the obvious thing naturally is important. If you are lacking in basic sniping skill, learning the practical use deviation shooting is even more unreasonable.”

“.....Deviation shooting is?”

“I went through yesterday.....”

“Like I said, I properly apologized for yesterday didn’t I! ‘Sorry for falling asleep’ I said.”

“Haa.....I only remember that you argued back though, well never mind.

Deviation shooting is about calculating the target’s movement, your own shooting speed and distance, then shoot your magic cannon at the area your target will move to beforehand, your current skill is impossible though.”

She probably attempted it unconsciously just now though, Kanata thought from the scene when Misora was trying to shoot the higher level target.

That was still amateur, worse still, the stray bullet might become friendly fire.

“B-But.....Then what do I do? If I can’t do deviation shooting, then the next ranking battle will be doubtful, right?”

Misora complained with a pale expression, while Kanata scratched his head and answered.

“A~ah, that’s also true.....”

“D-Don’t say it like someone else’s business! You are our instructor you know!”

“Don’t make such an anxious face. There is no way I have not thought about the methods to win.”

However, Misora’s growth was indispensable in order to do that. Her physical ability foundation was high but her battle skill could not keep up, honestly speaking she was useless as she was now.

“In the ranking battle, it won’t work if you can’t do this. So for four days from today, you will spend all your time practising shooting like your life depends on it.”

“I have been t-trying hard.....!”

“I know that. But you can stop Magic Sword skill practise first, focus on shooting practise alone. I will try to stay with you as much as possible, but I still need some time to guide Lecty.”

“.....What about Rico?”

“First I have to persuade her to participate I guess.....Well, I will teach you the secret plan that will become the key to victory now.”

Misora became excited and her eyes shined at the word secret plan. Although she had not completely trusted the traitor before her eyes, she was curious about what the secret plan was and asked.

The school-wide speaker reverberated at that moment.

“S-128 Royal Guards, Kuusen Madoushi Division Sophomore second year Chloe·Sevegny. Please come to the Kuusen Madoushi Division Head office immediately after hearing this announcement. I repeat.....”

Kanata spoke on reflex after hearing the announcement.

“Nn, strange.”

“What’s strange?”

“A school-wide announcement for calling people does not use such formal wording, not to mention the term Royal Guard was added. A matter involving the Royal Guard, I can’t help but feel anxious about something happening in the surrounding.”

He continued his explanation towards Misora who was impressed.

“This stiff way of speech usually signifies the omen of something.”

**

The western sun at dusk shone into the Kuusen Madoushi Division Head office. In the middle of the afternoon practical training, Chloe was called to here.

“How may I help you?”

“Look through this data.”

Having a stern personality, Feron immediately passed the compiled data on her desk to her.

Chloe’s expression gradually dulled while looking through the data one by one.

“T-This is.....!”

“The recent frequent small-type Magical Armoured Insect assault incidents.....Finally at last night, an incident where the D-rank squadron on night guard duty never returned happened.”

“.....My condolences.”

“You don’t need to mind. This is our role after all. Doing your best, risking your life for someone, just that it is an unappreciated role without people noticing.”

Despite saying some self-deprecating words, Feron stood up with her usual unchanged stern face and looked at the scenery at the Training Ground through the office’s window.

What reflected in her sharp pupils, were the figures of the majority of

Kuusen Madoushi Division students training diligently without knowing anything.

She spoke without looking at Chloe.

“Back to the topic, the word 「Chimera」 seemed to be mentioned in the weak transmission with the D-rank squadron at the end.”

“.....Chimera is it?”

“Yes. The guard duty from now on will be done by C-rank squadron and above, but needless to say, your Royal Guard will also focus on the guard duty, please take note.”

Her right hand slightly trembled from the disgrace of losing their comrades while she watched over the Kuusen Madoushi Division students training. Chloe noticed it, but did not say it out.

“It’s probably a large-type Chimera. Since there is no land in the aerial zone surrounding the flying city.”

“.....That’s what I think as well.....Say Chloe, you don’t seem to be shaken up at all.”

“Getting scared before the battle will cause a winnable battle to lose after all. It’s alright, this 「Nirvana」 will take responsibility if anything happens.”

Seeing Chloe who put her hands before her chest and bowed respectfully

in court style, Feron's stern expression also loosened.

"I feel that I can catch a glimpse of the secret to your strength....."

Thanks to Chloe's daring approach, she was able to relax her shoulders. The figure of Feron whose mouth loosened on this rare occasion looked like a normal girl no matter how someone see it.

"Speaking of which, what is the F-rank squadron that Kanata·Age is in charge of doing now?"

Although she was busy with all the paper works, she remembered after looking at Chloe's face.

The traitor Kanata and the three failure girls. Honestly speaking, even though it was Chloe's recommendation, she still felt that letting that traitor Kanata become an instructor was unsuitable. It was like attaching a 'super' to the F-rank squadron's title.

"Let's see, I think if it's Kanata, he may betray everyone's expectation in a way that I cannot guess. Since Kanata had been doing things that I don't understand since the past."

"Nn? What does that mean?"

Feron could not comprehend the meaning of the speech from Chloe who was smiling like an angel.

Part 3

Inter-school ranking battle. It was a competition to improve battle skills of the squadrons organized by Kuusen Madoushi Division. It was divided into five leagues of A~E, leaving a good record in the upper league meant that the members of the squadron would not only receive good evaluation, but also affect their treatment in the school.

Simply speaking, the upper league squadrons would receive various privileges such as scholarship, squadron budget and equipments. For example, S-128 squadron which was the last year's champion, not only had their dorm fee and school fee exempted, they also had privileges like priority in new equipment distribution and scholarship that did not require repayment.

At the Arena facilitated for this inter-school ranking battle. The squadrons scheduled for today's battle had already began their warm-ups in this bowl-shape dugged Arena.

“Hey, who do you think will win?”

“— You girls are the next to fight.”

The anxious Misora asked at the sparsely occupied spectator seats, Kanata immediately answered. It was a rest day, Kanata brought Misora who was the squadron leader to observe.

There was barely any people in the spectator seats. Battles between both upper league squadrons was one thing, only bored people or people related would come to watch a battle between both lower league squadrons.

“B-But the other side has four people, while E-571 squadron is a three-man squadron!”

It was stipulated that a squadron's team member upper limit was five, while lower limit was three.

“The deciding factor of the battle is not just number of people. How unified the team is, is also another deciding factor. Look, your opponents' eyes^[1] on the other hand are sparkling.”

“.....U-Un. They seem to be enjoying the situation a little.”

“Yes. Because they have such leeway, they don't mind the disadvantage in number at all. You all are also a three-man squadron so try to learn from them.”

Getting pointed out clearly, Misora showed a somewhat non-committal face.

She understood that Kanata was not the type to be perfunctory about winning or losing, but she hoped that he could be a little more considerate to her.

At the center of the bowl-shaped Arena, energy was poured into a ball-shaped monument engraved with fine rune characters, 「Sorcerer Field」 enveloped the surrounding area. This was a barrier erection device that convert physical and mental damage into magic power, an excellent tool that made non-lethal mock battle possible.

Once the judging group announced the start of ranking battle, both teams spread out according to their roles immediately, while squadron leader made judgements on the ever-changing battlefield, or team members acted on their own judgements. Ranking battle's winning condition was to snatch away the symbol mark that hung on the opponent's squadron leader, or to knock out the squadron leader. The time of the match was at most around fifteen minutes per battle.

The match had started for a few minutes. Kanata watching the match on the spectator seat spoke to himself.

“Heh, they have good unity for not making any mistake as just an E-rank squadron.”

She could see from his eyes that he was interested in the outcome. *Why would this guy become a traitor if he enjoys the outcome so much?* Misora tilted her head unconsciously.

“Especially that combo-play is interesting. The middle guard and rear guard matched the single vanguard's movement and changed their positions to provide support. Since they attracted the pressure from enemy at times, it was a battle plan that fully trusted the vanguard. The vanguard with such strong support must feel very confident.....See, one of their opponents has been struck down.”

The squadron with number advantage was toyed around by the opponent team's combo-play, one by one they were striked down. Kanata admired such ideal movement that could be included in the textbook, but.

“C-Can we really win against those people that can move like that?”

As if her words did not reach his ears, Kanata who was concentrating on observing their next opponent told her.

“Nn, why are you showing such an anxious face?”

“B-Because, that kind of combo-play.....we can't do it! And how should I put it, they have the solidarity that we don't.”

“That's cause you all have never trained together before, in the first place you all are strangers one month ago, and only began to eat lunch together recently. That kind of fragile relationship cannot form solidarity.”

“T-This means.....You are saying that w-we can't w-win!?”

“I didn't say anything about you can't win. I just said that the opponents are strong.”

“Then, then we can win.....?!”

“Who knows. It depends on the effort you all put in.”

“Depending on the effort we put in.....”

To the clearly dejected Misora, Kanata confidently smiled and admonished her.

“What are you doing, getting cold feet before the battle. Your opponents look down on you all. So you all need to teach your opponents a lesson for being careless. It’s fine to just think of it like this.”

He showed a confident smile as if enjoying this situation, Misora’s wavering instantly stopped.

“You have followed my instruction to do your special training. You, who have put in your utmost effort, have no reason not to be able to match up against them. Effort will not betray the person. Betrayal is always between people. What E-601 squadron is encouraged to do is to train while believing in yourself. There is no other way. Am I wrong?”

Facing the silent Misora, Kanata told her with an understanding face.

“Then, you should go for your personal training now. I still have some business to take care of.”

“What business?”

“Who knows. I’m just going to meet an oddball that has some capabilities.”

Leaving behind Misora who tilted her head in doubt, Kanata went to the meeting place.

**

“Oi, what are you trying to do?”

“Fuu, you are still a former ace despite rotten to be able to detect my presence.”

After Kanata arrived at the meeting place beneath the tree in the park near the Arena, he noticed Rico who was walking back and forth in the park closing in on him from behind.

Just this alone would be considered as a childish prank, but Rico's was different. That was because just now Rico had suppressed her presence, a skill that was specialized to Magic Gunner to hide their presence in aerial battle and snipe the enemy, she was intending to test Kanata.



“It’s just by luck. I just turned behind by chance, coincidentally see your figure closing in only.”

“Not just sensing my presence, but also making a visual confirmation you mean. I thought that vagrant Kuushi only relies on presence to detect, neglecting visual confirmation.”

As expected, only Rico alone had outstanding knowledge and skill. She was an absolutely necessary talent in E-601, the corner of Kanata’s lips slightly curved up after confirming it.

“You asked me what I’m trying to do just now, I the Goddess will throw this question back at you. What exactly are you trying to do?”

“Nn, what do you mean?”

“Saying you need me for something, calling me out is still fine. However, purposely choosing the place in front of the Arena to meet up.....I can feel some ulterior motive.”

Calculating the time that ranking battle would end, Kanata called Rico out right at that moment. He had even taken the high amount of pride Rico had by calling herself a goddess for having natural talent into account.....

“Heh, seeing your appearance, you have also watched that ranking battle, right?”

“.....”

“What are you going to do since your squadron has no chance of winning as it is now?”

“.....”

“You also understand that. The squadron you as a goddess belong to will have eleven lose streaks huh. Or perhaps you don’t want to lose so you run away. However, you being a goddess won’t run away right?”

“.....Your provocation is a little too cheap.”

“Your strength is necessary for my squadron to win. It’s impossible with just the strength from Misora and Lecty.”

Kanata stared straight at her after saying so, Rico brushed her hair and showed a ‘not my business’ face.

“Needing a Goddess like me is only natural. However, I do not plan to participate a battle that will make me lose pathetically.”

Rico’s pride would not allow her to continue to lose. She would not participate in the battle because she hated to lose, or if she would participate the battle and show a result other than losing.....

Kanata told her as if seeing through all of Rico’s concerns and feelings.

“I see. Then, what if I impart onto you the secret plan that can guarantee you victory?”

“.....What, did you say.....!?”

“It’s a chance to overturn your unfortunate life.”

“.....What exactly are you basing your words on when you don’t know much about me?”

“I know more or less if it’s about you. You are, the owner of senrigan^[2] right?”

“.....”

Recorded on the profile sheet was the highest rank detection type unique skill 「Senrigan」. Seeing that sentence, he was shocked.

“I don’t know why you normally don’t use Senrigan, but I believe that it is not exaggerating to say that you have the ability of a Goddess. At least that is my evaluation of you.”

“Fuu, evaluating a Goddess such as me like that is obvious. In the first place, it seems that the ugly mortals are unable to comprehend this though.”

Saying so, Rico faced Kanata with an unconcerned face and snorted.

"Fumu, you are a little bit interesting. I suppose participating in a battle once in awhile is fine.....However, I won't join the training. I hate sweating after all."

Leaving those words behind, Rico gallantly left the place. She faintly realized that the result was just as Kanata had planned, but she would not dislike being evaluated to have the ability of a Goddess.

Part 4

Rico did not care about training like usual, while Rico somehow seemed to have grasped the the special training. She had resumed her normal Magic Twin Sword arte training.

On the other hand, the figures of Kanata and Misora could be spotted 4000m above in the air. They had begun the hovering Magic Cannon shooting training and high speed flying shooting training simultaneously since two days ago.

Large cloud pieces gathered in flocks, covering the blue sky like dots. Those were cumulous clouds.

Kanata was riding his 「Broom」 as usual, while Misora was following with flying magic. There were no signs of other students training in their surrounding. It was probably because they had separated from the air space directly above 「Mystogan」. Kanata slowly spoke in that desolate environment.

“Misora, I will only show you this move once so watch carefully.”

As he said, he thrusted out his right hand to his side. In the next instant, a Magic Cannon Sword appeared out of empty space all of a sudden. Misora knew the name of that sword.

“— Gladius!”

She unconsciously leaked out that word.

That sword was the reason Kanata was called 「Kuronos」. The big sword that could overthrow everything which the former ace of the strongest squadron in 「Mystogan」 held. It was once the sword of destruction that the top of the 3000 Kuushi in 「Mystogan」 deserved to own.

Ignoring the engrossed girl, Kanata lightly raised it with one hand. He aimed in the direction of the nearby cloud cluster with the muzzle attached at the tip of the sword.

Then he channelled his magic power, pouring everything into the Magic Cannon Sword. At the same time the cylinder-type magic converter attached at the hilt of 「Gladius」 quickly turned five times, the blade released a mysterious shine. Then Kanata pulled the trigger with a stern look —

Magic Cannon Sword battle skill — Strike Blaster

Explosion. An arm-ripping-like recoil. And happening at the same time, an enormous whirlpool-like black light streamed through as if devouring everything.

That was a pitch black light torrent like the crystallization of violence. A hot wind that could burn the atmosphere blew, a big hole dug through the cloud cluster in the air space far away from Kanata. The atmosphere and remnant magic power brought about after shocks as if swelling.

That was something that happened in an instant.

An instant that was hard to judge if it was a dream or reality.

“No way! J-Just now.....What did you do!”

What the astonished Misora witnessed was the overwhelming difference in their ability. It was a showy Magic Cannon Sword battle skill that made the people wondering what he did felt idiotic.

There were many restricted skills in the cannon type battle skills, this was amongst of those those many.

“Nn, didn’t you see what I did?”

Kanata who had just used a big skill nonchalantly said.

“And so, this is the skill you will be mastering.....Oi, are you listening?”

No way, what did this guy just say! Misora half opened her mouth and stiffened. *T-This skill is what I will be mastering!?*

“C-Can I master such a strong skill!?”

“The possibility is there. Well, it depends on your effort.”

Misora could at most hit 50% of the time against a fixed target, and under 20% against a moving target. Even so, compared to not a single hit at the start of the training, this was a significant result.

Kanata instructed Misora just like this. The way to channel magic power, the way to pour magic power into Magic Cannon Sword, the simple engraving technique to carve rune words onto Magic Cannon Sword, the timing to determine the critical point, etc.

Then after lecturing through the whole sequence he asked as if it was natural.

“Then try it once.”

“.....U-Un. I’m going to try it.”

Unable to raise the Magic Cannon Sword lightly with a single hand like Kanata, Misora awkwardly tucked in her right elbow and supported the sword body with her left hand to take the shooting pose she used during shooting training.

However, she could not shoot immediately. The time to channel magic power to activate the Magic Cannon battle skill was necessary. After a while, enormous magic power was channeled through her body, poured into part of the cylinder on the Magic Cannon Sword — the magic converter, then.

Magic Cannon Sword battle skill — Strike Blaster

Misora pulled the trigger, the recoil shifted the aim greatly upwards. At the same time a ray of white silver light shot out. It was much inferior to the enormous black light stream that Kanata released, but it was still a high power magic cannon shot that normal cannon shots could not compare to.

That power shone intensely to the degree that she could not believe it was her own attack.

However, she could not muster any strength on her whole body suddenly. Immediately after the light disappeared from the sword tip, Misora was assaulted by an intense weakness feeling and dizziness.

“T-This much burden on magic power.....H-How are you able to maintain your calmness!”

Misora was dumbfounded by the tremendous magic consumption and turned back.

Before her eyes was — the figure of Kanata who was calm like usual, but something felt amiss.

His expression seemed calm like usual. But on closer look, it seemed like sweat drop was appearing on his forehead, his face paled and his breathing became shallow, as if he was pretending to show calmness.

Misora had often witnessed those symptoms when she was in Preparatory first year. The Kuusen Madoushi Division freshmen that did not know their own magic power limit often encountered the so-called — Magic power exhaustion.

“Nn? What is it?”

Kanata showed a confused face while still pretending to be calm, asked her as he rode on his 「Broom」.

「Broom」. Kanata was using it to fly even in today's training. Not using the continuous magic power consuming type flying magic, as if suppressing his magic power usage to the minimum.....

Speaking of which, apart from using it for long distance travel, 「Broom」 was also used to prevent the freshmen from falling due to magic power exhaustion during the activation of flying magic.

Could it be.....this guy doesn't have much magic power capacity? Even though he is a former ace.....?

“In addition to Misora's shooting training, this will be included. After suppressing the power, stop after three shots a day. Since there is a limit to the number of shots, shoot each time cautiously. Exceeding this will hinder your training after all.”

Kanata did not listen to Misora's words as usual and explained, but.

“How many times have I asked ‘What is it’, is there something on my face?”

“U-Uun. I-It's nothing. Just my own stuff.”

Kanata who was focused on explaining did not notice the change in Misora.

What is it I wonder, Misora felt amiss and thought. It should not happen originally. Anyhow, he was someone with the qualification to stand at the top of Kuusen Madoushi Division in 「Mystogan」, to show early symptoms of magic power exhaustion after just this much of battle skill.....

“Ok, then this will be added to your training. Any questions?”

Even so, she could not ask. Misora shook her head. *If I just asked like that, my relationship with Kanata will crumble*. Such insecurity passed through in her brain.

Traitor. The former ace traitor that suddenly absented from the ranking battle, and this matter have some connections.....?

Hiding such insecure thoughts away, Misora concentrated her mind to the present, beginning her second strike.

Part 5

The day before ranking battle. Gathered in the squadron room, the three members, including Misora, were having a battle strategy meeting with Kanata. On the whiteboard was filled with 3D battle strategy arrangement Kanata had somehow drew, and each of their positions added in.

“Then I will begin to explain.”

Kanata gathered the attention of Misora and co with that as the starter.

This was the battle plan that could lead them to victory against the opponents in the next ranking battle after all. Despite him being the traitor, it was a battle plan made by a former ace.

It must be a brilliant battle plan that they themselves could never expect, Misora and co anticipated his continuation excitedly.

“— Lecty stop them. Rico support. Then Misora will end it with one shot. With this it will roughly determine the outcome I guess.”

“” “”
.....

The fully confident Kanata nonchalantly said. However, Misora and co could not fathom what was just said. Question marks appeared in their

heads as they were confused.

In the first place, the whiteboard filled with sketches just now was never used at all.

“Nn? What is it?”

“I totally cannot comprehend what you just explained.....Please be more specific!”

“Exactly. A Goddess like me also cannot understand. You actually did not think of anything, right?”

“K-Kanata-san! W-We, can really win, right!”

Misora and co complained as if they had given up. However, Kanata tilted his head and crossed his arms with a *Why can't you all understand?* look.

“Un.....Lecty as the vanguard will stop the enemy squadron leader. Then Rico will provide support fire. With that at least the opponent squadron leader will be unable to move, and maybe attract the attention of one more enemy if lucky. During that time, Misora must fly around the field desperately to keep yourself free. Then the free Misora will supply magic power for Strike Blaster to finish off the enemy squadron leader is what I meant, why can't you all get it?”

“— You have never said all that before!”””

Misora and co synchronized angrily, while Kanata felt surprised.

“Nn? I didn’t tell you huh?”

Ah I don’t know what is what anymore, Misora pressed her forehead with her hand. Then she suddenly realized something.

“.....Speaking of which, is that really fine?”

Rico and Lecty also nodded their heads after hearing this question.

“Lecty will stop their squadron leader, Rico will provide support fire. After that, me who is free will end it with one strike.....You are still a former ace, but is that all you have come up with?”

There was not a single group training. And Misora had just become familiar with Magic Cannon Sword battle skill, still having the weakness of taking a long time to activate that Strike Blaster skill.

“I repeat, we have never once practised as a group before! There is no way that kind of simple plan can win! Shouldn’t we spend some time and do group practise instead!?”

Misora was wavering, but Kanata had no intention of changing his battle tactics and frankly spoke.

“Even if you said group practise, just a single day of cooperation won’t do. A castle built with sand will easily get washed away by seawater after

all.”

“B-But, w-will this really make us win?”

“Yes. This is too simple. I don’t want to lose pathetically.”

“Umm Kanata-san, is this alright!?”

Kanata showed a confident smile towards the faces of these anxious students.

“If you all can get along well, E-571 won’t be a match. That won’t be just a victory, you may even beat your opponents without a scratch.”

“L-Lies! The plan you said just now, c-can really win.....!?”

“Of course. Not just handling your own roles, it will be useless if you don’t grasp the roles of your teammates as well. Once you are able to remember the movements of your teammates’ roles, your victory will be a certainty. Not to mention that the strategy I provided is for actual battle, it is useful even against the Magical Armoured Insects. So it’s fine to be confident of yourself.”

The inter-school ranking battle was a simulator for battles against Magical Armoured Insects in the first place.

The victory was determined by snatching the symbol mark from the opponent squadron leader, or defeating the squadron leader. It originated

from the more intelligent commander type Magical Armoured Insect leading the soldier types.

The strangely convincing words from Kanata quietened down the objections against the battle plan.

"Then since the battle plan is completed, you all will be talking about the rest. From here onwards, it will be up to you all."

Kanata lightly knocked his chest.

"Whether you all are satisfied with being the F-rank squadron, or want to climb up, show me your mettles."

Gulp. Misora and co swallowed their saliva from due to his impactful speech.

**

It was finally time to test the result of their trainings tomorrow.

After finishing the diary for today, Misora fell onto her bed in a 大 shape. She was totally exhausted from the training up to this day.

Then she reviewed the results of her training. Sniping skill first, her hit rate against a stationary target was around 50%, while moving target was about 25%. She probably could not be able to score a hit with normal shots in the ranking battle tomorrow.

The next part would be very important, the mastery of Magic Cannon Sword battle art. Although she more or less had the form of using it, she had no experience shooting it in group cooperation practice before. Kanata told her not to mind, but as long as the ending strike of the battle plan fell on Misora herself, she would be anxious no matter what.

Uu, realizing her loss of confidence, Misora sat up on her bed and slapped her cheeks with both hands in the momentum.

“Oww~~ie.”

However, she sobered up with that. Though her cheeks was slightly red, Misora thought that she must not show weakness as a squadron leader. Not to mention, since Kanata told her that the key of the battle plan was herself, she had to put in two times the effort than others.

— *Whether you all are satisfied with being the F-rank squadron, or want to climb up, show me your mettles.*

“That guy can also say something good.”

Misora unconsciously leaked out a little laughter.

There was no point worrying about it alone in the first place. The obstacles before her eyes would not disappear no matter how much she worry about it, it would be useless to just be heart broken.

The next to show up in her thought was Kanata. His facial expression was poor after showing her that Magic Cannon Sword battle skill.

That symptom was magic power exhaustion no matter how she looked at it. *No no calm down me. There is no way for the ace nicknamed 「Kuronos」 to have magic power exhaustion. What I witnessed that time might be a totally different disease. In the first place, I should not be thinking about that about focus on tomorrow. It will be fine to ask him after this.*

Thinking about tomorrow only was also a responsibility of the squadron leader. Misora who thought so quickly fell asleep without even the time to feel nervous, probably because of the fatigue accumulated in that day's training.

Part 6

On the day of the squadron ranking battle. In the Arena, the figures of Kanata and others could be seen floating in air.

As they were unpopular, and there were few people who wanted to see a ranking battle between both E-rank squadrons, the spectator seats were quite empty.

Their opponent, the E-571 squadron, could not help but leaked out laughter after seeing Misora's team coming.

“With this our promotion to D-rank is confirmed.”

“A~ah, our opponent is the F-rank squadron. We can fight with ease.”

“Let's hold a celebration party after we return, a celebration party I say.”

Treating them as the F-rank squadron, nobody saw Misora's team as a threat.

As for Kanata's side that were flying towards their opponent.....

“Heh, they are looking down on us.”

Once he thought about what would happen next, Kanata showed a grin confidently.

“I’m so pissed off!”

“Fuu, humans look down on others because they are small-minded themselves.”

“That means you are also.....”

“Fumu, a Goddess such as me is a different existence from human so there is no problem.”

“I-I.....Somehow become very nervous!”

Kanata called out to Misora and co who were each in their own thoughts.

“Hey, do you all know?”

He casually told them even in the place before their enemies.

“Amongst the people here, there is probably nobody who thinks that you all may win. So, there is no need to feel pressure regardless of ten consecutive losses or a hundred consecutive losses.

I have repeated this many times, but following my battle plan you have a

fifty-fifty chance in this battle. Then the next will be you girls' —”

Just when Kanata was about to give them his final encouragement, the Sorcerer Field was forcefully dispelled.

The surrounding people were confused about the disappearance of the barrier. They could not understand what happened at all. Various expressions showed on their faces. At that moment, the judge instructed everyone from Kanata's group to descend into the city.

“What exactly is going on?”

At the same time as Misora landed on the Training Ground, the alarm installed in the city sounded off. The low-pitched *Uuun* alarm indicating an aerial invasion repeated three times.

The Floating Academy City 「Mystogan」 instantly became silent.

In the next instant, rumbling came from all over the city.

There was rarely a chance for Magical Armoured Insects to get near the city itself. At least such a situation never happened last year.

Though Kanata did not witness himself, the streets must be filled with sad cries and people escaping everywhere in fear.

“Of all times, the aerial invasion alarm comes at this timing.....”

Amongst the ones in the Training Ground, Kanata spoke first.

As expected of a former ace, he was used to such a shuraba^[3]. He did not look nervous at all.

His comrades from S-128 squadron should have received the order to focus on removing the threats, so they should already be carrying out their mission in the outer sky of the city at this instant.....— *Well, Chloe should be fine. They won't get hurt so easily.*

As he was thinking all those, he looked at Misora and others who had anxiety on their faces. He would absolutely not allow those living in this city to die. Protecting the people living in this city was the duty of the Kuushi.

Quietly resolving himself, Kanata headed towards the refugee shelter area with Misora and others.

[] [Main] []

1 Referring to E-601's opponent in the next ranking battle which is E-571. ↵

2 Senrigan - 千里眼. Eyes that can see thousand miles. Usually used as the name of an ability that allows the user to see very far, English word is usually clairvoyance or farsight, but it is kept as romanji here. ↵

3 Shuraba - 修羅場. A metaphor describing the scene of carnage. Often used as a cliche scene of multiple girls fighting over a guy. However, it is used as a literal chaotic hell-like scene. ↵

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Chapter 5 - The robbed sky, then.....The girls soaring through the air

Part 1

The whispers of wind Chloe heard was the reason she felt something amiss.

She might have missed it if it wasn't for that.

“What happened? Chloe senpai?”

Yuri asked while flying at the back to her right.

They were in the patrol flight right now. The height was 3200m. On the day before, after the incident of a squadron not returning, the patrol rotation was changed to focus on Royal Guards as the center.

In the direction 「Mystogan」 was advancing, there was something that resembled the structure of a cumulonimbus cloud, they went towards it to investigate.

There was no need to be alert if it was scattered thin clouds, but if it was a thick and dense cloud cluster, there was a danger that something malicious to the Floating City was lurking in it.

Chloe's squadron had already mobilized once that day, this was the second time. Just as they were returning to 「Mystogan」 after confirming no danger.

“Un, there is somehow an ominous feeling.”

Ignoring Yuri who showed an incomprehensible look, Chloe stared at the gaps in the big and thick cloud cluster. *Is there something there*, Yuri became cautious.

Small black dots could be spotted, but it was too far from here to judge what they were. Yuri thought that they should investigate, and was about to use the communication crystal to inform the surrounding to raise their alert.

Gashan. A sound came from the activation of the nearby mechanical device.

She turned her head back to see Chloe readied her Magic Cannon Staff sternly, locked on through her scope.

Converge. Aim. Shoot.

This series of action was carried out fluently, the cannon muzzle flashed red, surrounded those black dots and exterminated them. It was not just that, the strength of that shot also dug away the cloud cluster within its trajectory.

“It seems to be eliminated.”

Yuri informed Chloe whose destructive power was astonishing as usual without sparing her praise.

Her nickname 「Nirvana」 was not just for show.

Her normal personality was graceful, but would display an attitude fitting of S-rank squadron leader once battle commenced.

Despite Yuri showing a relieved face, Chloe did not lower her guard but raised it instead.

“No, it’s not over yet.”

“.....Yes, sorry for saying something improper.”

In the cloud cluster Chloe dug out, a large amount of small black dots overflowed from inside. The level of threat could not be determined from this distance, but it would probably become a fight to death.

“Looks like they were ambushing in there.”

During the emergency situation, Lloyd who was grasping the situation with composure since just now put his hand on the communication crystal to respond. He received a communication from another squadron patrolling nearby.

“What is it?”

“Looks like it’s a bad news.”

Lloyd reported calmly.

“The news of a squadron losing contact happened at the same time when the figure of Chimera is confirmed near 「Mystogan」. 「Mystogan」 has announced an emergency situation order. They want us to return asap.”

“Even if they tell us to return.....”

“Well it's just an announcement. Anyone would notice that this is not a situation that can let you return if you want to.”

“I-Is that fine! Chloe senpai and Lloyd senpai.....!”

Chloe readied her Magic Cannon Staff, then aimed at the 200m away Achernar class, and the bigger sized, mantis-shaped Procyon class Magical Armoured Insects.

“But Yuri. Surely we cannot bring all these back with us right?”

She shot again. A red stream rushed out with a big recoil, but the eliminated number was less as the enemies had spread out.

“I understand that much! But if the two of you do not return, there will be noone to take on the Chimera! I will distract them here.....”

Chloe turned to Lloyd with a troubled look after hearing it. He provided his opinion after understanding the intention of the squadron leader.

“It’s impossible with just Yuri. If only just maintaining current situation, but you won’t be able to handle an unexpected situation.”

Hearing those words of concern, Yuri’s expression clouded. Chloe comforted Yuri who was disheartened gently.

“Besides, Yuri. 「Mystogan」has Kanata.”

“That traitor senpai should be the first to run. Like that time.....”

“Yuri. About Kanata.....Please believe in him.”

“.....Chloe senpai?”

“Kanata’s personality will not let him leave those in trouble alone.”

“That’s right. He is someone simple enough to move once someone is in danger.”

Chloe declared with an angelic smile that did not show a speck of insecurity, Lloyd also agreed with her. They started to confront the Magical Armoured Insects that closed in. Yuri also joined the fray to support them.

**

Kuusen Madoushi Division Control Center.

In the dim underground with lighting concentrated, multiple monitors were displaying the outside images. With the hologram of 「Mystogan」 at the center, multiple large scale communication crystals were connected to the headphones worn by the operators standing by for emergency.

The moment Feron entered the room, she saw the anxious faces of other Division Heads and overall-in-charge. The siren rang right after she just finished the paperworks before noon, she had to give instructions down to squadron level for warning and evacuation according to rules, hence reaching here late.

Feron who held the full authority during battle instructed.

“Explain the situation.”

“A large scale Magical Armoured Insect assault. Please look at here.”

The operator immediately displayed the red dots around the hologram. It was not just a single or few dots. Thousands, or even tens of thousands of red dots flooded the surrounding air space.

Every one of them represented a Magical Armoured Insect. On the other hand, the Kuusen Madoushi from 「Mystogan」that were deployed, represented by blue dots, were overwhelmingly less.

“This is.....Quite overestimating our battle strength.”

Feron stared at the red dots that were increasing even now. Twenty minutes had not even passed since she received the communication in her office and rushed here. The countless red dots seemed to be led by something, forming a semi-circular encirclement formation in front of the path 「Mystogan」 was advancing.

Feron had experienced assaults of this scale a few times before. Despite them desperately defending, they invaded into the city, causing three-digit casualties including both Kuushi and citizens.



“Has the evacuation been carried out?”

“Yes. However, the injured continues to rise from this disturbance.....”

“There is no problem if it is going well. We are fortunate if it's just the level of injuries.”

The overall-in-charge that replied with a grim face, from here on — injury was nothing considering the large scale encounter battle against the Magical Armoured Insects. The Kuushi would be putting their lives on the line from here onwards.

“Situation is situation. Our current victory condition is to repel the enemy Magical Armoured Insects and Chimera as soon as possible. Defeat condition is the fall of 「Mystogan」, letting the enemy invade into the shelters within the city. Our deployment of battle strength will be the same as usual, forming seven battalions with A-rank squadrons as core. Let them defend the key locations.”

In the battle against Magical Armoured Insects, Kuusen Madoushi Division Head’s authority would be higher than even the overall-in-charge of 「Mystogan」.

The staffs rushed about in order to convey Feron’s decisions right after. Feron encouraged them.

“Battle is always like this. The situation is always changing, we won’t be able to move according to our will all the time. But please do your best for the sake of survival. That is the rule of this place. And those defeatists

should get out of here now. You can still make it if you run away now.”

The imposing Feron mentioned the words of running away. Everyone in that place was half a step slow to understand her meaning. There was no place to escape in the Floating City. Abandoning the city to run away was another matter, but abandoning what they should protect was — a serious act of betrayal.

Feron surveyed her surrounding. Not a single person dared to defy her sharp glance as she was the person in charge of Floating City defence.

“Very well. Then, commence the battle. Provide instruction to every unit. The first, second, fourth, fifth battalion with A-rank squadrons as core will set up a double defense line at the Floating City air space, the seventh battalion will defend directly above the city —”

**

Suburb zone three. It was originally a sparsely populated rural area, now even more quiet like a ghost town due to the evacuation of residents. Misora in charge of evacuation ushering reported.

“I have confirmed that there are no stragglers from evacuation within this area.”

“Fuu, I have completed my side as well. There are no stragglers from evacuation. Seriously, I am disheartened to have fallen so far to be doing this kind of plain work.”

Confirming if there were stragglers during evacuation, if there were anyone using this chance to conduct crime, were the tasks given to E-601 squadron that was assigned to the rural area.

There were less population in the suburb zone near the dome wall, so the evacuation was carried out more smoothly, but.

“I have also finished confirming my side.....Speaking of which, where is Lecty?”

Kanata and co went to search around, only to find Lecty squatting at a narrow road in the shade of a building, facing a black cat that was frightened and hid into the crevice on the road side.

Nyaa, she imitated a cat's meowing and rescued the frightened cat. Even animals lowered their guards before the innocent and pure her.

“Umm.....Kanata-san.”

Hugging the black cat, Lecty looked up with an expression of wanting to say something.

“Bring it along to the shelter.”

“Thank you very much!”

Holding the black cat like that, Lecty, with renewed spirit, ran towards the elevator connected to the shelter.

Watching the scene unfold, Rico questioned.

“Why are you here?”

“Naturally, it’s to see if there are any stragglers from evacuation.”

“I don’t want to hear that. I know your real strength. As a former ace, you should be going to the front line and trample the enemies.”

Even though he was a traitor, he was still a resident of this city, but Kanata behaved as if the commotion was unrelated to him in Rico’s eyes.

In truth, Kanata also wanted to participate in the battle right this instant. However.

“I also have various circumstances. Being a traitor and all.”

Kanata replied blandly. Rico silently took a despised glance as if saying *you are a traitor after all*, then continued to search for any stragglers in the town area again.

However, Misora felt suspicious while listening at the side.

Although it was difficult to comprehend what that carefree Kanata was thinking, she understood that he was someone with a strong will through the Hope of Hill incident.

Kuusen Madoushi Division had casualties every year, but she believed that at least Kanata was someone who would not abandon those people to the last of the last moment. Since he treated herself who was a failure enthusiastically, providing her guidance. There was no way such a passionate guy like him would not fight to protect others.

Then, why is he not sortieing out? Perhaps there are some reasons that he cannot sortie? Then maybe.....

“Umm, Kanata-san. I have safely sent the cat into shelter.”

“Nn, Lecty. Thank you for the hard work.”

When she returned from the shelter, Lecty looked elated.

Kanata also changed back to his usual carefree face.

“What is it? Did something good happen?”

“Yes. When I was sending the cat, the people from the shelter are cheering for us.”

Those residents must be believing in the students from Kuusen Madoushi Division.

“I see. Then we cannot let their expectations down.”

At that time. The seventh battalion flying in vigilance directly above 「Mystogan」 suddenly began to panic, the countless existences swarming in from the surrounding like a black mist were.....

**

Countless buzzing noise from beating wings overlapped to generate a deafening noise like the groaning of earth could be heard.

Devouring humans, slaughtering, exterminating. Such were the wills of the Magical Armoured Insects.

The power residing in their bodies was Curse. A destructive power that humans could not comprehend.

Swarms of thousands of them flew in to assault as if burying the sky. The corner where they were gave people a hallucination of dark clouds looming over.

When 「Mystogan」 entered their sight range, tens of light rays suddenly shot out, hitting the center of the Achernar class swarm.

Tens of them were shot down in an instant. Then the light continued to pour down mercilessly, things that touched were burnt to nothingness in an instant, but the damage was minuscule due to the overall number.

The first, second, fourth, fifth battalion were assigned to the outer air

space of the city. With each battalion numbering 300 people, their total numbered 1200. Though the Kuushi that had real battle experience were few, they were the elite group of the Academy City. They each mercilessly repelled the Magical Armoured Insects with the weapons held on their hands without fearing them.

The Magical Armoured Insects turned their red compound eyes towards them. The small-sized trembling Finders advanced forward, assaulting the Kuusen Madoushi with violent speed.

The Kuushi arranged themselves in line abreast and released their Magic Cannon shots together. Uneven light rays shot towards the black swarm, exploding in the middle of the swarm.

However, the Magical Armoured Insects did not cower from the force. They used their overwhelming numbers to overflow past the Magic Cannon shots easily, reaching the Kuushi specialized in close-ranged combat stationed as vanguards and began the dogfight against them. Many were defeated in an instant, but it was an insignificant damage to the swarm of thousands as they made a beeline for 「Mystogan」 with a furious assault.

**

“All students from Kuusen Madoushi Division in charge of evacuation of the city are to prepare for battle. Use your best possible skills to annihilate the Magical Armoured Insects that are landing into the city.”

Feron’s voice did not contain a ‘yes or no’ choice. It conveyed just how desperate their situation was.

The reason was because the squadrons in charge of evacuation in the city were all E-rank. They were the squadrons sheltered in the city without joining in any real battles.

The first battle. The first real battle. The first fight to death.

“Suddenly joining the real battle like this is outside of my expectations, looks like they are even calling for the F-rank squadron huh.”

“Hey, it will be our first sortie soon, so don’t lower our morale! Stop with the F-rank squadron!”

“Fuu, being the opponent of small fries does not suit my personality.”

“I will w-work hard!”

Each of their pupils shone with resolve.

Although the things involved were different, he thought that this light represented the strong willpower that humans held. Not a single person would run away from the warning. It was sufficient to give him such an instinct.

“There are buildings in a city battle so be careful. It will be bad if you knock your head flying too fast.”

Kanata confirmed the determination of Misora and co, and they sincerely nodded their heads.

“I will defend the back. As an instructor, I will follow up when you all are in danger. So you all can fight like usual.”

Then after he said that, Kanata took out the Broom and dagger from empty space and readied himself leisurely. Protecting the back of the students was the responsibility of the instructor.

Misora and co nodded towards Kanata who was standing solemnly, then each of them activated flying magic, entering combat mode against the landing Magical Armoured Insects.

**

At the height lower than the dome wall, the low height aerial battle to defend the city.

The Magical Armoured Insects were moving about freely, while the movements of 「Mystogan」 defense side were dull. E-rank squadrons mostly had not made up their resolve to fight, the students entering their first battlefield would obviously have rigid movements.

In the midst of the clash, one Magical Armoured Insect was coming after Misora with high speed. It was a Magical Armoured Insect like a giant fly with red compound eyes — Achernar class.

With a body length of about two meters, it was the weakest of Magical Armoured Insects, but due to its habit of moving in swarms, the threat level increased when multiple ones assaulted together. Although only D-rank and

above were allowed for real battle sortie, E-rank should be sufficient against an enemy of such degree.

She voiced out each of the points to note he had taught her.

“First maintain a wide view, must keep the opponent within my range of sight.....”

Misora confirmed that there were no other enemies in her surrounding. He told her before that with her current power, she had to run away if multiple enemies went after her, but there was no other enemies aiming at her right now. There was only one enemy wanting to shred her up and devour her.

“Next is to suppress it, and try to get behind the opponent. Just suppressing without the need to hit.”

She did not narrow down her aim, and began deviation shooting after slightly lowering her flying speed. There was no need to outmaneuver with speed against one enemy. One out of three shots grazed the target.

A lucky shot. The Achernar class suddenly dropped its speed and exhibited irregular mobility, zig zagging towards Misora instead of a straight line.

“No way! I can’t aim like this! But —”

In the instance the two crossed, Misora intended to quickly aim with her Magic Cannon Sword and pull the trigger, but she had not reached the level

of being able to shoot at the moment the two crossed each other in high speed flight. When she was practising with Kanata, Misora did not manage to make a single close shot in such a situation. Hence she endured the impulse, gave up on pulling the trigger and focused on flying.

“Then try to get around to the opponent’s back.....”

Just like the iron rule of aerial battle, not lowering the speed when crossing with each other and make a small turn. As she did not randomly accelerate, she was able to execute a smaller turn than normal. She further delivered suppressing shots during the enemy’s right turn to obstruct. Then she closed in on the position at the back of her opponent while maintaining her speed.

“Then make sure the body exceed the area of the scope aim.....”

Misora curved her finger on the trigger.

“H-Hit —— !”

Shoot. The recoil shook her entire arm.

Probably due to the slight distance between the two, the Achernar class realized and tried to make a left turn to dodge. However, its left hind leg was blasted off.

After half a beat, *Gishia* —— a painful cry was heard. Even so, the Achernar class rotated upwards and charged at Misora. After its foot was blown off, it looked full of hatred and madness. It closed in in a straight line.

It tried to gnaw Misora into pieces with its abnormally developed mandibles. However, Misora was not afraid.

“I will not lose!”

Stopping in her flight, she stared at the Achernar class coming straight towards her. Then as if she was hiding a huge knife, she aimed the muzzle of her Magic Cannon Sword suddenly and shot out her magic cannon. The response was there but she could not determine if it hit. The figure of the enemy could not be seen. She succeeded in avoiding the move to kill her but.

“.....W-What’s the result!?”

Misora turned towards her back nervously.

The Achernar class that crossed her was splashing out green fluid from its body and its limbs were making death struggles, but the scene of it falling helplessly onto the city street was shown.

Despite not finishing it off in one shot, she still succeeded in inflicting a fatal damage.

**

“Her accuracy is still nowhere good enough.....”

Kanata smiled fearlessly while riding on his Broom. He flew dexterously in

order not to let Magical Armoured Insects detect and catch him.

“However — You did it, Misora.”

And he praised her gallant figure.

Misora’s advantages were her stamina and acceleration speed, then the root of all that was the magic power inherited from her mother.

She still had a mountain of problems such as high altitude aerial mobility, or accuracy proficiency on the shooting itself, although she had a bad habit of shooting blindly, following the probability rule, she could still score a hit if she shot plenty enough.

Furthermore, despite being inexperienced, Misora had learned one of the Magic Cannon Sword battle skill.

“I d-did iiiiiittt ———!”

Before Kanata who showed a confident smile, Misora was hopping up and down in the air with an innocent expression and cheerful voice, she even did a somersault due to the momentum.

She was overjoyed on her first kill record.

Kanata felt as if Misora’s growth and joy was part of his own, he cheered her on in his heart.

There was no problem at all up to this point. Up to this point.....

It was not known if Kanata's thoughts had reached her. Then after that, Misora who was overjoyed encountered another Achernar class. As it was her second time, she faced it with confidence from the start, maintaining an advantage in the battle. Then Misora flew low with her back facing the city ground facing the Achernar class, shooting out many times.

However, all of them were evaded.

She probably got frustrated. Her aggressive pupils shone mysteriously. *Charge, charge, charge.* Hovering in the air, she poured in an amount of magic power as if to destroy a Procyon class. Then.

“Geh! Oi oi, if you shoot that in this street.....!”

— Magic Cannon Sword battle skill — Strike Blaster

Towards the Achernar class still flying in super low altitude, she shot the strike blaster. Appalling blast noise and overwhelming magic light exploded. Rico and Lecty who were fighting somewhere else probably became speechless after witnessing this.

“T-This is.....Not my fault ok.”

Even Kanata was also shocked, unable to speak nonchalantly like usual.

Strike blaster had vaporized the target Achernar class in an instant.

However, it was not satisfied with just that, the road below, metal frames and compound reinforced plate between the surface and underground level were all penetrated through, allowing the underground facilities to be seen from the sky directly.

Of course, the surrounding buildings of the landing point were hit by the shockwaves and aftershocks of the crash, resulting in a half destroyed state. There were also buildings Kanata went to before, but probably because he was as shocked as the person who made the destruction herself, he had not thought about that. Speaking of which, the culprit Misora was opening and closing her mouth anxiously for some reason.

“Fuu, that’s a bit collateral damage. Luckily there is no citizen casualty though.....”

“.....I-I think this is something that should not be done.”

The proud Rico and humble Lecty showed up.

They were fighting individually, Rico sniped two enemies, while Lecty killed five Achernar class with her Magic Twin Sword.

“Fuu, this is a war crime. Activating a high power magic cannon within the Floating City, causing a large scale indiscriminate destruction. Why have you done such a despicable act?”

“T-That’s awful Misora-san! I-I didn’t know Misora-san is someone who does such a thing!”

Kanata, Rico and Lecty looked down to the hole penetrated through the street in the sky. There was not a trace of anything in the ten meter radius hole. Soon the other warning-evacuation squadrons would probably come to investigate the incident. Which meant.

“This is the worst.” (Kanata)

“It’s the worst.” (Rico)

“This is the worst.” (Lecty)

The three spoke at the same time, showering Misora with eyes of condemnation.

“~~! Why nobody wants defend for me that it is a misfire!”

Misora awkwardly tried to defend for herself after being dumbfounded for a while.

“I-I also.....didn’t intend for things to happen like this! C-Coincidence, coincidence! W-When I realized, the strike blaster has already blown the area away! N-Not to mention y-you are the one who taught me this blast! Y-You also have to take responsibility!”

As expected, this was beyond his expectation, Kanata still responded.

“I don’t remember telling you to use that blast to destroy the area. Heck, your family’s café is also blown away.”

At that instant, Misora realized that she had just blown away her own house cum café, her face paled.

**

In the Kuusen Madoushi Command Center, Feron's expression was grim in the dark room dimly lit by monitors.

She was staring at the hologram of 「Mystogan」 that was getting surrounded by red light dots wordlessly.

In the instant the battle began, 「Mystogan」 was surrounded by countless red dots from every direction, even allowing the enemy to invade the city air space after a moment.

“This is bad. The enemy total force is over ten thousand.....”

“I don't feel that many Magical Armoured Insects from the display. Also, the main battalions have not received much damage yet, you are being overly worried.”

The short and chubby Economic Division Head interrupted. He had a bad habit of voicing his opinions outside of his expertise.

“Since we have Chimera as our opponent, the other side must have a battle plan. Apart from the battle force displayed here, it is logical to consider their reserve forces. Also, all the seven battalions are engaged in

battle. The Kuushi are fine now as they still have stamina, but what do you think will happen when they are worn out?"

As Feron questioned back, the still young Academy overall-in-charge replied instead of the Economic Division Head who was showing a bitter face.

"The damage to the battalions will speed up. And the point of the question is, the existence of the Chimera that is controlling the Magical Armoured Insects right?"

"Yes, that's the point."

Feron bit her lower lip and asked the operator.

"Is the enemy Commander type still not found?"

"Yes, we have not seen it yet....."

Those that resembled more like the shape of insects were called Primitive type Magical Armoured Insects. If they could find the individual Commander type Magical Armoured Insect Chimera that was issuing the commands, it would be possible to overturn this disadvantage but.....The figure of that enemy could not be found.

One of the operators suddenly reported loudly.

"A report has arrived! A squadron engaged in battle at second defensive

line has discovered the figure of Commander type Chimera. It is closing in above the city air space. The enemy is medium type Chimera 「Chimera·Deneb」. It is rushing towards the city with countless Achernar class. The location is in Northwest direction of 「Mystogan」, D-field, distance approximately 500, height 3000.”

“「Chimera·Deneb」……?”

Strange, Feron held her chin with her hand. With such a scale of enemy, the commander was only a single medium type Chimera. However, they could not leave it alone.

“Send a squadron that can take it out immediately.”

“However, all the troops are having their hands full right now. They are desperately holding their defensive line against the unexpected large number of enemies, there is no troop with any spare force.”

“Is there not a single defensive line that can temporarily extract party of the battle force?”

“Yes! The defensive line will be in danger of breaking if it is thinned out any further.”

Feron was deep in thought for a while, and made up her mind.

“Then, I have no choice. Pass me the speaker for within the city.....”

“What exactly are you planning to do?”

“Let E-rank squadrons participate in the interception as well.”

“However, there will definitely be sacrifices if do you that.....”

The operator speechlessly glanced over to Feron.

In order not to let her subordinates see her trembling hand, Feron still showed a firm smile under such situation.

Not letting people die inefficiently like that was her job.

“It does not matter. Someone has to go exterminate that Chimera, and since there is no other squadron available except E-rank squadrons, it is only obvious that they need to do it. Even if there will be many sacrifices, it is their duty to give their lives for the best future of humanity. Order to all E-rank squadrons. Go and slay the Chimera.”

**

The spare troops from the squadrons defending the city streets. Despite being told in a roundabout way, it meant all of the E-rank squadrons deployed in 「Mystogan」 now.

The content was to slay the Chimera 「Chimera·Deneb」 that was approaching. The squadrons that moved after being told that defeating it would change the current flow of battle were.....none.

This situation had caused chaos, or fear in them. Or perhaps both.

However, someone had to do it. Not doing anything would just cause more people to get hurt.

E-601 squadron gathered up for a discussion. It seemed that Kanata had many experiences of witnessing that kind of individual.

Just let Kanata defeat it directly in that case, then all the problems would be solved. Misora was thinking so, but he sat on the rubble with his arms crossed, showing a troubled face. He then slowly raised his face as if he had decided something.

“Hey, you girls.”

Dusting off his bottom, he dropped a bomb.

“You girls will defeat that 「Chimera·Deneb」.”

The sudden announcement shocked Misora, Rico and Lecty speechless.

“W-We have not even won in the ranking battle, suddenly having a Chimera as opponent.....W-What is this impromptu going after the real deal!? There is no way we can do that! If we are unlucky, we will die if any of us three makes a mistake!”

“Just like Misora said. I seriously think that you got a screw loose.”

“S-Suddenly defeating that big thing is unreasonable.....”

Misora and co immediately showed a defeatist face.

The people who thought that those girls who were treated as the weakest F-rank squadron in 「Mystogan」 could win were none, at least amongst the 6000 citizens.

“You didn’t train for the sake of losing your lives. You girls trained in order to survive, and then protect the whole lot of people. And then, you girls have become strong enough to defeat 「Chimera·Deneb」 despite being a Chimera. I can promise that as your instructor.”

However, the only exception was said by Kanata like that. He displayed the seriousness without a trace of his usual carefree attitude he once showed on Hope of Hill, the face of being stronger than anyone, to look at Misora and co.

They who were despised by the surrounding as F-rank squadron received the trust of this instructor. In that case.....Misora as the squadron leader should answer his expectation intuitively.

“Hey. Although he is a pervert, he is still our instructor and trusts us, I also trust Rico and Lecty. So, let’s resolve ourselves alright?”

Misora persuaded the other two as a squadron leader. She had already done her best to gain their trust as their squadron leader in between the trainings. The rest would be up to their own judgement.

“I-umm-I am.....aiming to become a Kuusen Madoushi to protect the people in the Floating City! S-So, this.....this isn’t the time to give up! T-The strength to protect. So.....if there is even a small chance of winning, if it is still possible to protect everyone in 「Mystogan」, I cannot just watch at the side without doing anything!”

Lecty timidly took a step forward after saying so.

“Fuu, Misora. Since when have you become enough to order me around?”

“R-Rico.....!”

“However, Misora’s act just now is not bad. Taking your order once is also not a bad thing. This is also a chance to be active and solve that woman’s distress along the way, showing her how excellent I am is also not bad.”

“That woman?”

“Well, you can ignore that for the time being.”

Rico elegantly took a step forward.

“So you girls have resolved yourselves.”

Kanata calmly spoke.

Those that were too scared to move under this situation would only be a drag in the battle later. Hence he was testing if Misora and co would be willing to step forward themselves when it counted.

Those not able to rely on comrades would not do, those relying on comrades from the start would also not do. And then based on what Kanata saw, Misora and co all passed.

“Maintain your vigilance in the sky. Instructions will be given by the squadron leader Misora.”

Glancing over everyone present, Kanata announced loudly.

“I have no intention to let any of you die, nor to let the citizens of 「Mystogan」 get hurt.....You girls can do it.”

The three nodded with their best confidence until now.

**

D-field. Second defensive line. Height 3000.

Endless rings of cannon shots and sword artes. Angry roars and screams. The shadows of Kuushi and Magical Armoured Insects mixed around in the battlefield.

The figure of an enemy on a different level appeared. The vestige of bug

could no longer be seen on that monster, it was incomprehensible how a creature had evolved to that extent. Some Kuusen Madoushi had witnessed the figure of the enemy commander type already, but hesitated to attack.

“Listen up. The foundation of the tactic is like what I have said many times before, vanguard Lecty will distract the opponent, rearguard Rico will support, mid guard Misora will fire the one shot to end it.”

Kanata explained with a serious face on his Broom.

“That is 「Chimera·Deneb」.....? Uwa, it's full of tentacles, disgusting.”

“A~ah. But those tentacles you see move fast, don't let your guard down.”

It had a huge mouth like a giant walnut covered in green moss, with countless tentacles surrounding itself. A Chimera existence that did not exist in the evolution of living things.

In addition, countless Achernar class surrounded around 「Chimera·Deneb」 as if guarding it. Hence, despite scattered shots coming from far away, it seemed to be difficult to land a fatal hit.

The majority of Kuusen Madoushi Division students already had their hands full defending their respective air space. This was not the scale of a colony that they could find an opening and defeat. Not to mention if they attracted its attention, that troop could face the possibility of collapsing.

“Then all members commence as planned.”

Misora and co nodded. Then the F-rank squadron challenged the Chimera.

**

“— Here I come!”

Lecty rapidly descended with her Magic Twin Sword 「Ama no Habakiri」 in both hands. She targeted 「Chimera·Deneb」 and charged at the same time.

The wind pressure and counter-convection current beat against her skin. Then the Achernar class group intercepted her after noticing her presence. There were too many to count, at least no less than fifty. The figure of 「Chimera·Deneb」 could be seen beyond this solid defense.

It was a one against fifty battle. This probably could not be called a battle anymore. At least not something that a student belonging to the E-rank could handle.

However, the only exception would be this person called Lecty·Eisenach, the inheritor of the Sword God Eisenach's Magic Twin Sword style.

She took a *hassō*^[1] stance, taking an irregular movement without fear by slowly circling them in a spiral shape. First the three scout Achernar class passed by her, the magic swords in both her hands flashed at the same time. The blade that was supposed to be connected to the handguard seemed to vanish for an instant due to the slash speed.

The Achernar class could not comprehend what happened. Their bodies broke apart a mere moment later. Along with green body fluid, tentacles, wings, front legs, back legs, mandibles that were the parts making up the structure of their bodies were severed.

“W-What have you done! Lecty!?”

“What I did.....I just cut them.”

Two flash ten kill. *Why is Misora-san so surprised about Eisenach Magic Twin Sword Style (such an obvious thing)*, Lecty tilted her head in her heart. She just revealed a fragment of her sword skill that was drilled into her since childhood.....

This was not a battle against a human opponent, she did not need to mind about eye contact, nor need to be polite. Especially she who had anthrophobia had an easier time against monsters instead of humans as opponent. Whether she was afraid of battle or not was another matter.

“Lecty. The last one was only slashed five times. The other two were seven times. You still seemed nervous so just relax yourself more.”

“Y-Yes! Kanata-san, I will be careful next time!”

Misora saw the enemies breaking apart by the time she came back to her senses.

Lecty used the Achernar class as a stepping stone, as if hopping around on floating stones towards her next prey.

Her opponent was not human. She did not have to worry about making eye contact, nor accidentally injuring her opponent. She still could not use her full power as she was still somewhat nervous, even so she could still somehow do it.....No, she had to somehow do it. For the sake of her comrades —

“Lecty, please advance straight just like that.”

“Yes!”

The message came from Misora. Following her instruction, Lecty set 「Chimera·Deneb」 as her target. There were still many Achernar class loitering around it, but she was closing in bit by bit vigilantly.

Lecty judged that she should be able to reach 「Chimera·Deneb」 and moved. In that instant, her skin felt a humming from the air and she used her twin swords to guard.

At the back of that Lecty was an eerie wing beating sound and presence. The surrounding Achernar class closed in to devour her.

“.....!”

Sensing that presence, she turned her head back at the instant she was about to be eaten — a blue magic bullet flew in from somewhere and shot the enemy down.

“R-Rico-san!”

Before the eyes of her who showed a relieved face, the figure of Rico moving up to mid guard while holding her sniper rifle in stance was there.

**

“Heh, though you are sniping as you like, your skills are still superb as usual. Rico.”

“Fuu, that much is only obvious.”

Rico, holding her sniper rifle shaped magic gun 「Athena」 in stance, pulled the trigger again and again.

The sharp magic bullet caught the Achernar class in flight as if it had expected the opponent's movement.

Long distance shooting and high speed moving target sniping. Even Kanata could only provide support fire at best, but Rico could accurately snipe them.

Though both were shooting type, the world of sniper was something Misora could not understand.

The world of magic gunner was harsh. One shot of magic bullet could take away the life of an ally. Not to mention someone who could make

correct judgement of situation, accurately predict the movement of the enemy, and to execute the sniping was extremely rare amongst the Kuusen Madoushi Division.

The sharply released magic bullet passed through with pinhole accuracy and correctly penetrated the target.

Rico matched the movements of the vanguard Lecty, covered not only the rear but also the air space of mid guard, shooting down the Insects closing in from blind spot. This could only be achieved with a shockingly large peripheral view and judgement ability.

And when other witnessed her sniping form, it simply looked like taking aim and pulling the trigger. Rico's excellent sniping skill caused such a misunderstanding.

If it was true that she did not put in effort, then she probably had truly genious sniping talent.

"If I defeat that Chimera or something, my evaluation in Kuusen Madoushi Division will probably take a big leap."

Chasing behind Lecty were the countless Achernar class colony followed by the figure of 「Chimera·Deneb」.

As planned, Lecty had attracted the enemy.

Rico supported with sniping. The colony of over 300 Magical Armoured Insects with Achernar as core were kept in check by only two people as

calculated.

This was due to Lecty's Magic Twin Sword skill and Rico's Magic Gun skill as well as judgement ability as preface. They did not defeat all the enemies, but only attracted them away.

And there was also a limit to Lecty's stamina and Rico's concentration. If any of them were to be exhausted, this optimal movement would fail. The two would become fodders for the Magical Armoured Insects —

However, there was the last person who preserved her strength for the one shot to end everything there.

“Fumu, the historians of next generation would probably say this. Rico·Flamel does possess the matching power of the reincarnation of a Goddess.”

Even though she was in the middle of sniping, Rico looked away from the scope, looked at Kanata and told him.

Releasing a *Hah* sigh, Kanata pointed the front with his right index finger wordlessly.

“It’s fine. No problem.”

In the direction Kanata’s finger pointed, there was an Achernar class rapidly descending from directly above. It probably closed in secretly.

However, Rico did not even look up and raised her magic gun up with her right hand confidently, then pulled the trigger. After that, viscous green fluid and ugly flesh pieces splattered in the sky.

“Fuu, that one just now is unfortunate. This kind of ugly existence that can only feed on humans, even dared to try and eat me. Know that it is not strong enough to have a Goddess as an opponent.”

**

“Misora. There is an opening at seven o’clock. The opening is always changing, first continue your charging.”

The voice fluttered from somewhere Kanata was at.

“I-I know already!”

.....But even though he said so.

The deafening noise from beating wings. She was surrounded by the flying Achernar class loitering around. Misora was under attack from twenty individuals since just now. It was one fifteenth the number Lecty had attracted away, but it was sufficient to heavily pressure her.

Misora desperately looked for a gap in the encirclement. Desperately looking for top bottom left right front back in all direction for a gap.

No matter where she ran to, the Achernar class would follow her like

shadow and block her. There was no way she could charge like this. Using random movement to escape the attacks was already taking her all.

The black shadows that was gradually closing in on Misora who was running around. The shield formation in her Protector could prevent fatal injuries, but activating it would cost magic power that she had stored up.

“Not there. In the reverse direction.”

“I know what you want to say, but it’s not that easy.....Kuh!”

The mandibles suddenly appeared from the front. Anxiety caused her to falter, making an unstable movement. Then her posture broke, causing her to be late in opposing. She could not avoid. But in the next instant, that unit was split into two and green body fluid spewed out.

“Calm down Misora. You are necessary for this battle plan.”

The figure of Kanata holding a dagger with dripping body fluids on his left hand was there.

“Y-You.....”

“Hey Misora, stop idling and start moving desperately. Rico and Lecty are working hard to buy time for you.”

“B-But.....”

I cannot escape with my speed.

She flew along with Kanata who was riding his Broom. Even so, Misora was toyed around by the enemy, ended up facing back to back with Kanata. Everywhere was enemy. A squadron with just three people facing that number of opponent was just too disadvantageous, it could even be thought as reckless.

However, the man at her back said that they could win.

“Misora, forget about the complex evasion and just fly straight. Your speciality is most effective when flying in a straight line.”

Dodging the Achernar class's attack with paper-thin margin, Kanata spoke after slashing it from the side.

“So just fly up in the sky without any hesitation. Use the vertical boost to shake them off. You will definitely shake off all the enemy that way.”

“U-Un.....”

She stopped taking those complicated evasion course like she did until now — just flew in a straight line towards the sky.

Achernar class assaulted her like bullets, but Misora's acceleration created afterimages. It was a hallucination of speed caused by the distance judgement and acceleration speed. There was only a difference of less than even a hundredth of a second in this chaotic battle. However, that instance of time could exceed all expectations.

Misora tucked in her chin and looked at the faraway sky, she accelerated upwards as if to break through the stratosphere.

Height 3200. 3400. 4000. 4800 —

The shocking acceleration speed that caused even the Magical Armoured Insects pursuing her to give up.

Her trail extended in a straight line, she had reached a height to overlook the whole battlefield while dragging her afterimage. This was Misora's world.

"This is a move that can only be used once. The other side is not stupid, so they will be able to see through your acceleration speed. Once the enemy reached the same height as you, you will be restrained. So you must charge your magic now."

The remaining enemies were easily avoided by Kanata.

Looking down at the air space from the sky above, she could clearly see Lecty luring away many Achernar class and 「Chimera·Deneb」, Rico supporting it, and Kanata effortlessly covering them.

During this period of time, she had to charge enough magic power to defeat it. The six-chamber cylinder type magic converter spinned, the white silver Magic Cannon Sword 「Razgriz」 released a mysterious shine.

“Charge complete!”

Misora shouted with all her might.

“.....Lecty is luring the enemy, you will descend towards Lecty.”

“Understood!”

The time spent on charging her magic power was exchanged from her comrades desperately bought time. To answer their efforts, Misora dived towards Lecty with the thought of wanting to help everyone as soon as possible.

Before her line of sight, Lecty was desperately retreating while wiping away large drops of sweat.

“Hurry up and come here! Lecty!”

“It’s fine, Misora-san. I can still somehow.....M-Misora-san! Behind you!”

Misora anxiously turned her head. Although she raised her guard towards her back, there was no sign of enemy.

She shifted her line of sight down. There was an Achernar class dashing up from below like a horn.

“Kuh.....!”

She thrusted her Magic Cannon Sword in a hurry. However, leaving aside Rico or Lecty who excelled in battle skill, it cleanly dodged Misora's Magic Cannon Sword with a normal barrel roll.

Misora activated the magic shield of her Protector in panic. She tried to defend herself from Achernar, but due to overcharging her magic power just now, there was no magic power left for the shield.

The moment Misora judged that she could not avoid, she held onto her Magic Cannon Sword without letting go no matter what happened.

Soon after, a strong impact assaulted her.

My shoulder is probably eaten away. But it felt less painful than that. Misora timidly opened her eyes, only to see Kanata riding his Broom next to her with his right shoulder bleeding.

“Misora, Chimera is coming.....Have you resolved yourself?”

Kanata somehow stabbed the compound eye of Achernar with his dagger, issuing a manifesto to Misora.

“Y-You!”

“I said it before, I have no intention of letting any of you die.”



Kanata calmly spoke as if it was nothing at all. It should have been very painful, but his face only twisted slightly without groaning in pain.

Misora still did not know about the depth of willpower at Kanata's core he had displayed.

"Hey, there is a group of scattered Achernar class heading towards you. Be careful. Lecty is luring 「Chimera·Deneb」 to your side."

"Tch, can't be helped. Lecty, please just keep up like that. I will lure away all the leftover."

Misora glanced at Kanata who was still acting fine despite the bleeding anxiously.

"Alright, the enemy is finally coming here after so much trouble. Misora, you possess the sniping sense to even destroy your own house, you won't miss this right?"

"I-I won't miss. After so much preparations are done, I will be disqualified as a squadron leader if I miss!"

Leaving those words from her, Kanata immediately moved out to divert them.

Is Kanata fine? She could not ask him.

She saw the wound that could not be fine.

She was frustrated at her amateurish. With that feeling, Misora took aim at the enemy. The target was 「Chimera·Deneb」 further behind the Achernar class that was behind Lecty.

It was the commander type that raised the chaotic battle of this air space. Everything would end once it was exterminated.

Hence she put all her thoughts into this one strike.

“Remember this! You tentacles!”

Lecty crossed past Misora. Lecty seemed to have said some cheering words as she passed by, but it did not reach Misora's ears.

She was just desperate. For the sake of her comrades that fought together, for the sake of Kanata who accompanied her through all the hard work in her special training.

She tucked in her right armpit in stance, supported the gun body of the Magic Cannon Sword 「Razgriz」 with her left hand. Misora shouted, representing the thoughts of all the Kuusen Madoushi who were protecting this air space, this city, this world.

“— We are the Kuusen Madoushi of 「Mystogan」!”

Then she pulled the trigger.

Rumbling noise. A recoil that seemed to tear off her wrists and dislocate

her shoulder. And then white silver light streamed out as if burning the sky.

A stream of purifying light torrent containing strong thoughts, first enveloped the vanguard Achernar class.

An instant evaporation. Everything.

The white silver light reflected in their eyes made the struggle between power seemed like a joke.

「Chimera·Deneb」 was at the back. Even that was mercilessly annihilated by the one strike. A big hole opened up in its walnut-shaped body and it sank.

Just one strike. However, it was the first and last strike containing all the power of thoughts which penetrated through everything.

Misora's thoughts, Kanata's belief, the thoughts of all Kuushi in 「Mystogan」.....

“Haa, haa.....Did we win?”

“W-We won right?”

“Umu. I cannot see us winning, but we won?”

Lecty and Rico gathered next to Misora. They could not determine if they

had won the battle.

However, the Magical Armoured Insects surrounding them immediately retreated away.

“A~ah, for the time being we did not lose. But do not let your guard down yet.”

Kanata nonchalantly said. Although he was injured on the right shoulder, he did not exhaust much stamina and magic power.

“B-But why is everyone still fighting?”

Misora looked towards the air space that were still in battle. This D-field and the neighbouring area were still in battle. The light from magic cannon shots never dwindled.

The commander type Chimera was slayed. By right the enemy should have started to retreat. Even so.....

“W-Why are the enemies not retreating after we beat the commander type Chimera!”

**

Kuusen Madoushi Command Center.

“Even though the enemy Chimera is defeated, why is the attack still not stopping!”

“Yes! Still only one portion of the Magical Armoured Insects retreated.....”

The Economic Division Head roared back angrily after hearing the operator's report.

On the magic projection hologram of 「Mystogan」, a part of the red dots representing the enemy had withdrawn, more than half remained and continued to attack the defensive lines.

Over 2000 Kuushi continued their battles. It proved that the enemy did not retreat.

The report of the Chimera's defeat once raised the morale of the operators, but now they were greatly disappointed. Even the staffs were like this, the Kuusen Madoushi Division squadrons at the front line would probably be even more confused.

Feron asked as she held her chin with her hand.

“The report on Chimera's defeat is not a mistake right?”

“Yes, the front line confirmed it before reporting.”

“Please confirm it once more. And if the figure of Chimera could not be confirmed, shrink down the battle line gradually. Each battalion will be

reaching their battle limits if this continues.”

She felt something amiss the moment 「Chimera·Deneb」 appeared.

Could such a scale of Magical Armoured Insect colony be controlled only by one medium type Chimera? Not to mention commander type appearing at the second defensive line itself is very rare.

It was a move that was not normal. Such a move must have a reason.

Appearing unnaturally. An act to attract attention. Chimera revealing its appearance from the start..... Could it be a diversion tactic? Thinking up to this point, Feron realized the source of her amiss feeling.

“Hey, have you heard anything about Magical Armoured Insects having intelligence?”

“Can that kind of monster have intelligence.....”

Economic Division Head who was suddenly questioned shook his head.

“According to the latest Medicine Division’s anatomical study, Chimera’s intelligence is much higher than what humans have recognized. The figure of strange monster-like Magical Armoured Insects can cause fear to humans, but at the same time make us feel contempted that they are monsters do not possess high intelligence. They even hypothesized that if the Magical Armoured Insect Chimera continues to rapidly evolve, there is a possibility of individuals appearing with same intelligence as humans or even higher.”

“H-How is this talk related to the current situation.....”

The hologram of 「Mystogan」 before their eyes. The number of those red lights did not decrease, they were moving organizedly even now. Feron widened her eyes a little as her eyes shone.

“Namely —”

**

“There are multiple Chimeras!?”

As Kanata declared it so casually, Misora almost misheard him. And then in contrast against the shocked expression of Misora and co, Kanata showed confused face instead.

With the retreating Magical Armoured Insects as background, Kanata and co were discussing in the sky.

“Nn? I said that ‘For the time being we did not lose yet’ just now, right?”

“Yes. Kanata-san did say that.....”

“Then I properly said it. We did not lose.”

“W-What do you mean?”

“Don’t tell me did not lose also mean we did not win.....?”

“A~ah, that’s what I meant.....”

“W-Why you! You are saying such an important thing so casually!”

“But I did say ‘do not let your guard down yet’.....”

Kanata nonchalantly answered. But what his words implied was.

“— D-Don’t tell me you.....You know that there are multiple Chimeras from the start!?”

“Nn? I didn’t tell you? There are so many primitives, it’s obvious that just one Chimera is too few.”

“““— You didn’t tell us!”””

Everyone retorted Kanata.

Misora realized at that moment. Why he did not participate in the earlier battle.....

It meant that judging from the scale and force of the Magical Armoured Insects at the start, he predicted that the enemy had more than one commander type Chimera and preserved his strength. He calmly analyzed

the situation, predicted what actions the opponent Magical Armoured Insects would take.

Misora looked at Kanata with a mixed shock and respect gaze, but he did not show any proudness for his achievement and maintained his usual face, making others unable to perceive what he was thinking.

“But I don’t know where it is. Did you girls receive any communication.....?”

“Umm, any special communication.....”

They confirmed that the Chimera was definitely present. Even so, they could not locate it.

Now then, how to find out where the enemy is, as Kanata was thinking so, Rico opened her mouth.

“Simply put, it is necessary to locate the big Chimera in order to protect the people in 「Mystogan」.”

“Well, something like that. And with the battlefield gradually shrinking, we are reaching the finale soon.”

“W-What should we do!”

“Fuun, it can’t be helped. I will get serious for a bit then.”

Kanata noticed a change in atmosphere and turned around, only to see Rico wearing a red-framed glasses there.....

“Nn? Rico, why are you wearing glasses?”

“Fuu, it can't be helped. Since the Kuusen Madoushi Division senpais are too useless, they probably cannot return if I the Goddess do not use my full power. Since I actively defeated one Chimera, it will be lonely if there is noone there to worship me.”

Rico seemed to supplement reluctantly.

“When I activate my senrigan, my eyes cannot focus, so the glasses are necessary despite obscuring my beauty.”

As she willingly used it before he requested, Kanata looked at her with a somewhat touched feeling.

However, her shoulders slightly trembled as she wore the glasses, she prodded her fingers together as if feeling embarrassed.

“L-Like this.....Obscuring my beauty with such a thing, I am very reluctant about it.....”

“But, I think that the glasses suit you though?”

He expressed his honest thought.

“I-Is that so? But to that degree.....Maybe true.”

She had gotten used to hearing all the courtesy praises, but she looked a bit shy after being plainly praised like that.

After regaining her composure, Rico activated the highest rank detection type unique skill 「Senrigan」. Rainbow colored light shone in her obsidian pupils.

Senrigan used magic power reinforcement to abnormally develop the sense of sight, allowing humans to obtain a peripheral view as well as super long distance view that they originally could not see. Simply speaking — Able to see everything.

In the first place, things hidden behind obstacles could not be perceived, it also put an abnormal burden on the calculation territory of the brain, so it was not something that could be used easily.

“.....I found it. Number is.....one. However, it is quite far away from here. And also —”

Rico who was rarely shocked reported.

“— It's big. Tremendously big. Achernar class sticked to its body, but the Achernar class that sticked to it looked like tiny bugs. The 「Chimera·Deneb」 just now cannot even be compared to it.....In the direction of the sun, outside the battle air space!”

In the middle of hearing the report, Kanata's expression shaded for an

instant.

“That is probably the highly intelligent existence that the Medicine Division mentioned, the carrier type Magical Armoured Insect Chimera 「Chimera·Antares」. Apart from being the carrier for Achernar class, it also seemed to possess higher intelligence than other Chimeras. It's actually my first time seeing one myself.”

Kanata glared at the direction of the sun after saying so, then turned his Broom towards that direction and continued.

“As the battle line is gradually shrinking, you all should also retreat together with them. I will do something about it.”

“Don't tell me you are going to defeat that giant one all by yourself!”

“A~ah, that's right.”

“I-It's definitely impossible!”

“It's totally not impossible.”

He said so clearly. Then he looked towards Misora and co with his mysterious pupils that seemed to suck people in.

“Thanks to you all desperately defeating one Chimera, I am able to reserve my power. Then it's my turn to answer your perseverance. Not to mention that I will not pick a fight I cannot win.”

Normally speaking, he should inform his comrades and oppose that strong enemy together. However, Kanata purposely did not do that. Kanata as the traitor did not have much voicing power, and there were nobody strong enough that could keep up with him.

When he was going to defeat it all by himself as if it was natural, he felt someone clinging onto his waist.

“Nn? Why are you riding on my Broom?”

“.....I want to go and watch you fight as a Magic Cannon Blader.”

Misora who unreasonably squeezed onto Kanata’s Broom mumbled with an agonized look.

Honestly speaking, she was worried about Kanata. If what she witnessed before was really magic power exhaustion.....she felt that she must go with him.

“Hey Rico, Lecty. You two return first. I will go with him since I still have enough magic power.”

“It’s dangerous so you also go back.”

He noticed the determination in Misora’s eyes when he was going to throw her off. It was the same eyes he saw that time on Hope of Hill.

“No. I am absolutely going with you.”

“Can’t be helped then.....This is how it is, you two be careful on your way back.”

Kanata sensed Misora’s determination, he felt that she probably had some other purpose for doing so.

He judged that he could not dissuade her, and decided to leave this air space before more people accompanied him.

Not being able to comprehend why Misora wanted to go with Kanata, Rico and Lecty were confused but suddenly came back to their senses.

“Misora!”

“Kanata-san!”

The two had already been drawn towards the sky beyond.

**

D-field. First defensive line.

Chloe and her comrades who were on guard duty finally returned to the front most defensive line of 「Mystogan」.

Defense. Intercept. Counterattack. Defeat.

They were able to move the surrounding troops with their Royal Guard authority, instructing them to deploy in the most beneficial way to the battle situation. However, facing against the endless incoming giant herd of Magical Armoured Insects, one by one they continued to reluctantly leave the battlefield.

“It seems like the battle line is shrinking.”

“Reducing the amount of battle can lighten the fatigue within the troop, but it’s not going well when the enemies are so persistent.”

Like what Chloe and Lloyd mentioned, Feron made acted to make a breakthrough to the battle, but people were making blunders on the scene due to fatigue.

Chloe noticed that Yuri was idling in the midst of all these.

“What happened, Yuri?”

Even as she asked, Chloe was shooting small magic cannon shots with high homing ability continuously without any useless movement. The four shots of small magic cannon with red trail drew a gentle curve, pulverizing a giant fly monster.

She still had enough magic power, it was possible to make a wide area cannon shot. In this chaotic battle with the enemy and allies mixed in, she had to command the allies to evade in order not to cause friendly fire, but it

was impossible with the current formation. Feeling vexed about it, she focused on the enemy in front of her.

“I’m going to charge through with full power. The longer this drags on, the more damage our allies will suffer.”

“W-wait you, n-no way —!”

“D-Don’t tell me it’s Kanata senpai!”

Despite being in the middle of the battle, Yuri stopped and looked up at the faraway sky.

Before her line of sight, the figure of the traitor who was the former ace was rushing through the battle field by diligently handling his Broom, and a girl riding behind him.

The 「Black Hawk」 Kanata was riding drew sharp spiral trails with multiple Magical Armoured Insects pursuing behind, indicating a clear will of moving towards a target while avoiding the enemy attacks.

It was not the mobility of a normal Broom. That movement could only be executed by the user reading the wind direction, wind strength, wind pressure and other atmosphere information.

The moment Chloe recognized that figure, her line of sight was blocked by the Achernar class flying in from the surrounding, she was forced to continue her battle and could no longer see it, but.

“I said it before right, you can believe in Kanata.....”

Even so, she confirmed that it was Kanata after witnessing it for an instant.

“Lloyd senpai umm.....Do you know the matter regarding Kanata senpai?”

“No, I don’t know about it at all. However, I know that Kanata will protect the people in the city.”

In the midst of the battle, Chloe who felt relieved spoke gently.

“Kanata has not changed from the time he was admired by Yuri. It’s just that.....something happened. It’s something he can’t tell even Yuri who he trust, you see. So next time you see him just act normally.....Yuri?”

“He doesn’t seem to be running away.....”

“Un. Kanata will never do something like abandoning his comrades and run away.”

“.....Actually I have noticed a bit already.”

Yuri looked down as if she thought of something.

She already noticed that something happened to him and he did not want her to worry about him. Just that they had always been fighting together as the two-top, she felt lonely when he did not tell her anything, and that always dwelled in her heart, causing her to be frustrated —

“.....Yuri.”

Five Achernar class tried to attack the two who were conversing. The ominous sound of wing beat made Yuri tighten her expression and took stance with her Magic Sword.

“No, please excuse me. Let’s focus on battle for now.”

If I can return safely from this battle, I will go see Kanata again.

Yuri swore in her heart.

**

Witnessing that existence for the first time, Misora thought it was rain cloud — a nimbostratus cloud. A black piece of cloud big enough to cover the sunlight. But she soon realized that she had been wrong.

Carrier type Magical Armoured Insect Chimera 「Chimera·Antares」.

The nimbostratus cloud that covered the sunlight was a part of it.

A body measuring over a hundred meter. It had a disk-shaped appearance like two bowls pressed together face to face. That enormous body reminded her of — the floating iron fortress in the sky — something like that.

It opened the eyelids that spread across its whole body, and at the same time its red eyes caught sight of Kanata and her, countless Achernar class residing on its enormous body assaulted towards them.

The first and the biggest threat obstructing them was the Achernar class.

Each individual did not have high battle power. However, the number one threat of this specie was the large number. Based on the actual statistics, this specie had the highest human kill count.

“T-This will really be fine right!”

Misora looked at him anxiously.

The first strike. Kanata's left wrist rapidly swung down from his right shoulder to left waist.

The 「Gladius」 on his left hand scattered storm-like sword pressure. Then the blade slashed apart three Achernar class at the same time as if splitting apart the air itself.

“Nn, just like this.”

One swing three kills. Two more kills as he sheathed back. With regards to defeating the incoming enemies, Kanata's sword arte was 「Strength^[2]」. Different from Lecty's sophisticated elegant form, his sword arte was like mowing down everything in its way.

“B-But no matter how strong you are, just you alone.....”

Misora who exerted her full power to use her strike blaster had not much magic power remaining. Even so, she came along as she was worried about Kanata, and could only watch him as he fought.

Kanata had been fighting defensively since just now, let alone closing in on 「Chimera·Antares」. He was fighting on defense to prevent suffering a fatal injury.

Although Misora had no talent in Magic Sword skill, she could see a disordinance in Kanata's movement.

His Magic Cannon Sword somehow moved strangely dull. Although he used agile body movement to cover up his opening, the Magic Cannon Sword which was categorized as greatsword required two hands to swing.

“.....Don't tell me because of your injury back then!”

Misora pointed out after noticing the unnatural movement. Kanata had always used his left hand to swing his sword.

Just shooting was one thing, to continuously strike against small type opponents, wielding with two hands would be better than one. However,

Kanata murmured.

“It’s unrelated.”

“B-But.....”

“Getting injured during battle is my own responsibility. I was late in judging the situation. That’s all.”

Although he was avoiding using his injured right shoulder to reduce the burden, the pain from the wound still transmitted to his brain. However, even under such a situation, Kanata showed no sign of cowardice while enduring such a disadvantage.

“B-But! Can you win like this!?”

“Who knows?”

“Who knows you say.....”

“You won’t know the outcome until the end. However, I do not plan to lose before I fight, nor am I stupid enough to fight with no winning chance. What’s left all depends on luck.”

**

Not good. I will lose if this continues.

Kanata held his jet black Magic Cannon Sword in his left hand, the Protector he wore was worn out, cut open and full of holes, it had already lost its original function.

It's about time to decide.

Kanata made sudden breaks to his left and right after he finished charging, shortening the distance between him and 「Chimera·Antares」. His chance was only one shot. He did not have enough magic power for any more.

He had been storing his magic power while enduring the attacks since just now. Swinging 「Gladius」 with his left hand alone was difficult, so he had a hard time against the pursuing Magical Armoured Insects.

However, this would end everything.

Kanata's sword tip formed a straight line with his left arm, the muzzle aimed towards the enormous body of 「Chimera·Antares」.

This is the end. He pulled the trigger on the hand guard.

The magic cannon shot was the crystallization of magic power up to the limit of his whole body.

The pitch black light torrent that devoured everything — was deflected.

It was going to suck in the hard shell of 「Chimera·Antares」, but the converged light was deflected and scattered once it touched. Even though it was a high density magic power on top of being degenerately compressed, it was still not able to penetrate a point of its body.

**

“Strike blaster is deflected.....!”

Misora idly mumbled, then noticed Kanta's sudden change.

“H-Hey! Are you ok!”

She rode the Broom towards Kanata in a hurry. Sweat appeared on his forehead and his breathing was rough, he was obviously weakened.

Like I thought, I did not see wrongly at that time.....

Kanata's body would not listen to him as he heavily panted, he was barely able to maintain his posture with Misora supporting him from the side.

“I don't know what happened to you, but your magic power is — extremely low right?”

As Misora was asking, they were surrounded by the Achernar class.

It seemed that 「Chimera·Antares」 issued an attack order.

“.....We are surrounded!”

Misora yelled. It was all over. However, Kanata calmly spoke.

“Well, can’t be helped. It’s about time I get serious.”

“What are you saying at this point of time —”

Slip. Instantaneous fear rushed from Misora’s back suddenly.

“? Eh.....?”

The moment she felt that aura, the surrounding Achernar class were shaken.

Their movement hesitated for an instant as if fearing something.

“H-Hey, what was.....? Not magic power.....?”

Misora focused her sight on her side. Kanata was floating there as if nothing.

There was no change in appearance. There was no new arms growing, nor any horn appearing on the forehead. At least there was nothing abnormal as far as her eyes could see. Except that Kanata showed a serious face.

"Who knows. However, what I'm about to show is a negative battle reference. So you should not refer to it and absolutely not try to imitate it.....And no matter what happens, do not move from the Broom."

There is not really any change to my body. Kanata thought as he looked at his left hand holding the Magic Cannon Sword. *It's just that right now my hidden power — Curse is unsealed.*

His body was only wielding the power of humanity's nemesis.

The wing beat noise from the Achernar class flying around them furiously lowered a beat. Then they took distance away in fear as if they saw something they should not see.

Misora was confused about the sudden behavior of Magical Armoured Insects that was originally not possible. Next to her, Kanata closed his eyes to concentrate.

Organize my breathing and then empty my thoughts.

Feel the flow of everything unconsciously, call out towards the two powers in my subconscious.

One is magic power. The other is Curse. Human power. Non-human power.

Project the image of merging the two power into one and wield it.

Mix, refine, knead and repeat, converge.

In the depth of Kanata's body, something like a black swell was born. Then everything mixed together, creating a unified power.

What was created was the power that could break down everything.

「Hōryoku」

It was the compound of the two originally opposing power, the rebellious power that the Alchemist people could not prove to exist which could destroy the law of this world.

Since that incident, this joker power sprouted from depth of Kanata's body when he was about to be absorbed by the Magical Armoured Insect in order to protect Chloe.

**

Kanata's aura changed. In the instant Misora felt it, a mysterious sudden gust of wind furiously blew from Kanata without any warning.

What Misora was able to feel apart from the amazing wind pressure, was the multiple afterimages left by Kanata's upper left arm.

However, she could only hold tightly onto the Broom in order not to be blown away by the gust of wind, and did not see what happened after. Just

that after the mysterious gust of wind died down, Misora looked around and could not find any Achernar class that were surrounding them a while ago.

Were they blown away by the furious storm just now, or Kanata who is hovering in front eliminated the Achernar class somehow. Or perhaps both.

Misora was unable to deduct the correct judgement.

The only fact that she could acknowledge was that when she came to her senses, that menacing number of Achernar class completely disappeared.

“Y-You.....”

Her words got stucked. She wanted to ask Kanata what had happened just now, but she could not open her mouth anymore.

Even an amateur like Misora could understand. Kanata was surrounded in an atmosphere with sharpness like a sharpened knife. It was heterogeneously sharper than the time he was called 「Kuronos」 during his active period.

“It will be dangerous, so fall back. I am going to settle this.”

Announcing so, Kanata flew towards the enemy.

From there onwards, a world Misora could not comprehend spread out.

From the countless red eyes all over 「Chimera·Antares」, twenty rays of light different in sizes shot towards Kanata.

The rain of light that would be absolutely undodgeable by the time he saw. Kanata dodged it with paper-thin distance calmly, flew around the enormous body that was like a floating iron fortress.

If it's me.....I would probably be shot down over twenty times in the skirmish just now.

Misora thought that she and Kanata were already not in the same world despite being in the same air space.

Kanata maintained his flight close to the hard shell, exposing himself in the enemy's attack.

The figure of him defeating 「Chimera·Antares」 all by himself, caused her to associate it with a foot soldier conquering a huge stronghold by himself.

Even strike blaster could not penetrate its hard shell, what can he do just by himself.....?

However, in the surrounding along the trail Kanata was flying, green body fluid from the enemy was splashing out when it should not be possible.

“No way! Did he do something just now.....!?”

Right before the body fluid splashed out, she saw Kanata's upper left arm

vanish for an instant.

Perhaps I see wrongly, Misora suspected herself. However, she noticed that a change occurred to 「Chimera·Antares」.

The scale of light shot out from its red eyes decreased unknowingly, its enormous body began to retreat to take distance away from Kanata. And then, Kanata chased after it as if not letting it escape.

「Chimera·Antares」 shot out light with its remaining red eyes. Kanata flew towards it at the same time, his left arm and Magic Cannon Sword vanished for an instant. The places that launched the attack just now splashed out green fluid.

“Don’t tell me.....Limit skill!?”

It was a skill that had restricted usage due to the overburden on physical body. The traitor who was once called 「Kuronos」 had a skill called flash sword.

It was a sword arte that used magic power to accelerate his arm speed to the limit.

It could not be used by the normal body, and ignored the human body engineering category, a sword arte that would definitely raise the evaluation of vanguard when used at close distance. On the hindsight, it caused conspicuous burden on the body, even Kanata in the past could only use four times continuously at the limit.....

Misora did not care about the number of times he used the limited ability, she was more wary of that dangerous power that was like Magical Armoured Insect. However, that kind of limited ability did not exist in her knowledge.

Speaking of which, she heard about a rumor.

Although the Alchemist suggested its existence, it was still an imaginary product, the amalgamation of the two opposing power. It should be called 「Hōryoku」.

Despite using this miraculous power, Kanata was not looking good. Probably lacking in oxygen, his lip tinged blue from the tip.

However, the movement of 「Chimera·Antares」 became even slower. Misora understood that the fluctuating skirmishes were still continuing. And then Kanata suddenly took distance away from the enemy.

He probably realized his defeat and resolved himself to run away.
Misora was suspecting so, but Kanata's pitch black Magic Cannon Sword released mysteriously light, five-chambered cylinder revolved with a *jakin* sound.

Then the sword tip of the Magic Cannon Sword faced towards 「Chimera·Antares」.

**

So slow.

The light released towards him displayed like slow mode.

Twenty heat rays advanced with light speed. If someone could dodge those that were shot at the same time, it was no longer something the human reaction speed could achieve.

However, Kanata easily avoided all of them.

It was like child's play.

He did not feel contempted at that. He just used those strong-willed pupils to see through everything.

Upon arriving at 「Chimera·Antares」 through high speed flight, it opened its red eyes in order to freely shoot Kanata. However, the instant it opened its eyes, Kanata's upper left arm vanished for an instant and its red eyes were pulverized at the same time.

Un, it's slow after all.

Kanata flew at a distance on the verge of touching the hard shell of the enemy. He executed flash sword with the 「Gladius」 on his left hand towards the hard shell at the same time.

The slash line ran towards his diagonal left. Soon after, viscous green fluid splashed out profusely.

However, Kanata's figure disappeared at that instant. He maintained his high speed flight, continue to fly around the enormous body in a figure of 8. If he did not do so, the light released from the countless red eyes would catch him.

Kanata worked hard to make calm and mechanical movement, continued to toy around with the enemy. Although his attack had tiny effect against the surface of that enormous body, he still stuck to the repeated attacks.

The deflection of magic cannon shot before probably meant that this individual had high resistance against magic power. Perhaps, because its enormous body was a good target for sniping from far away, it obtained this trait during the process of evolution. However, the slashes from Mithril were hard and sharp.

Kanata continued to slash all over its body as if to rough up its enormous body.

Of course Kanata was also getting breathless, but he did not have the leisure to take a break.

Using the instance of gap to wipe the sweat from his forehead, he did not fail to be wary of his enemy and resumed his attack.

Facing such a huge enemy all alone, exactly how many Kuushi could remain this calm.

「Chimera·Antares」gradually recognized the abnormality of the situation, that floating iron fortress in the sky began to retreat.

If Kanata was the instructor of the enemy, he would probably evaluate its judgement as appropriate.

However, he would probably point out that it was foolish more than that. Its underestimated his existence in this situation.

It's indeed slow.

Prying open its hard shell with flash sword while puncturing its red eyes, he did feel something awakening in his body.

I don't know why, everything looks slow to me.

Reaching the top of the two pressed bowl shape, it opened eight of its red eyes at the same time and captured Kanata's figure to kill him.

Three eyes were punctured by flash sword before the light was shot out, then he dodged the remaining five light by tilting his head and rolled aside with paper-thin margin. The Protector that grazed it was charred, but he used flash sword to puncture the remaining five eyes before the eyelids closed up, causing body fluid to splash out at the same time.

During this time, only two seconds had passed.

.....No, am I just too fast?

Only he was moving quickly in that space which was close to stationary.

The actual combat that was long ago and the sharpened senses. The only sound that he could hear was the murmuring of wind near his ears — hearing the whispers of wind.

At the same time he recognized the fact, Kanata coughed severely from his lungs.

The sleeve that wiped his mouth was stained red. It was not from the attack of Achernar class. It was the movement that matched Kanata's sharpened senses, his physical body could not keep up.

Looks like it's about time to decide the outcome.

Although he casted body strengthening magic, his physical body would reach its limit first.

The power that was too strong for him tormented his body. He could not endure using the power that was too much for his body.

「Gladius」released mysterious light. Its pitch black blade released dazzling light.

“You can't defend against my magic cannon anymore.”

Kanata mumbled as he circled around to the top of 「Chimera·Antares」.

This enormous chunk of body that could cover up the sun, as if moving in

accordance to Kanata's threat, shot out light from all its remaining red eyes. Kanata made a big detour to the bottom right.

The light grazed past his skin. After thinly cut his cheek, it left a trail of burn mark. Kanata ignored it and arrived on top of 「Chimera·Antares」 with rapid ascend.

“Sorry, but.....”

The light attack disrupted for an instant. The sun was behind Kanata. Then without missing that opening, he held down towards the enemy's head from the sky above.

“— I have something that I must protect.”

Over sixty red eyes opened at the same time towards that Kanata.

There were still so many remaining after puncturing that much. Smiling bitterly, Kanata aimed the sword tip of his Magic Cannon Sword towards 「Chimera·Antares」.

“Magic cannon is ineffective against it! Has your head gone crazy from fatigue!”

Misora's voice came from the communication crystal at his ear. However, Kanata ignored her and locked his aim at the enemy's top with his Magic Cannon Sword. It was the most wounded and slowest to heal.

“Y-You should escape quickly! You are being locked on already!”

「Chimera·Antares」released the light with all its red eyes that could be used at the same time. The attack with a scale never seen before was released towards Kanata.

However, Kanata calmly spoke.

“Nn? I didn’t tell you?”

Saying so, Kanata leaked a confident smile and pulled the trigger on his Magic Cannon Sword.

“— The victory is decided the moment I used my full power!”

Magic Cannon Sword battle skill — Strike Blaster.

Compared to the first shot Kanata released, this black torrent contained much stronger energy as it swung down.

The one strike released with 「Hōryoku」deflected all the light shot by 「Chimera·Antares」.

Hurry up and disappear. This is the sky of Kuusen Madoushi.



The cannon shot filled with willpower easily penetrated the hard shell that was yet healed.

In the first place, he was damaging the enemy to find the weakest place of the hard shell. The hard shell with magic cannon deflection property was also not in its best condition like before.

The torrent that destroyed the hard shell continued to rush forward. Nothing obstructed its way, after the whole power devoured and destroyed all its internal organs, it extinguished everything.

An instant of silence. Then the enormous body that could cover the sky exploded in the next moment. Green body fluid and organs splattered out together, Kanata's figure could not be seen.

The shock wave from the destruction transmitted through the atmosphere, reaching Misora who was watching over from far away. Even so, she fixed her posture and desperately searched for Kanata.

Found it. He was free falling as a result of using that power.

His body fell without any movement. His body squeaked, his flesh, bones, all the substance that made up his body screamed in pain at cell level. Kanata who should have won was falling with a fatigue and haggard pale face. Misora controlled the Broom she was not used to while desperately chased after him.

“You, are you alright?”

Misora grasped Kanata's hand as she asked.

“Sorry Misora.....”

“What is it?”

Kanata mumbled.

“Are you injured?”

His face was devoid of blood, one could tell at a glance who was worse off.

“You are the one who is injured, idiot!”

Misora forcefully pulled Kanata onto the Broom, then immediately drew closer to him who was lying down.

“W-What was that power!? Why are you hiding such an amazing power.....!?”

She did not praise him for the battle result, but instead asked with a confused voice.

If he had that kind of power, it could have reduced the damage done to 「Mystogan」.

However, this question did not receive an answer. Kanata had already lost his consciousness.

[] [Main] []

1 Hassō-no-kamae. ↵

2 In the text it was written as 『剛』. It means steel/hard, which represents strength. ↵

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Epilogue

Training Ground. On the day of the delayed ranking battle.

One week after the incident of Magical Armoured Insect encounter was resolved. 「Mystogan」 was returning to its usual peacefulness.

The revitalization activity was carried out with Economic and Industrial Division students at the center, while the injured personels from Kuusen Madoushi Division were discharged from hospital one by one.

“What is it, Yuri?”

Next to Kanata whose left arm was fixed with a cast suspended by bandage, Yuri was standing there. Then she sat next to Kanata who was observing the aerial battle that would be held in the Arena barrier.

“Nothing, I just thought of coming to see what senpai’s students are like.....”

Unlike the usual sarcastic attitude, Yuri seemed to be treating Kanata like the days before he became the traitor that day.

Glancing over Misora and co who were facing off against their opponents from the audience seat, Kanata nonchalantly spoke.

“Did something happen to you? Your mood is somehow better than normal.”

“You are imagining things.....Speaking of which, senpai was in charge of evacuation guidance during that incident right, why are you injured?”

“Who knows. In the midst of that encounter battle, I fell and injured myself when running away.”

Taking a glimpse at Kanata who spoke like that, Yuri mumbled in a displeased tone.

“.....I dislike that aspect of you after all.”

“What are you saying.....?”

“Ah, the ranking battle is about to start.”

“This is the squadron with Kanata as the instructor huh. What exactly has become of the squadron?”

Chloe and Lloyd who went to buy snack and drink just now joined in the conversation. Noticing the atmosphere between Kanata and Yuri became more relaxed, Chloe had an angel-like smile at the warmness.

**

After the battle began. Misora and co. who held confidence after gaining the actual battle experience against the Magical Armoured Insects, immediately deployed themselves according to the battle strategy.

“Alright! No one is targeting me!”

“Uu, M-Misora-san! H-Help me!”

“W-Why has Lecty’s movements become so poor!”

“U-Umm.....I am still bad with making eye contact with my opponent, not to mention the three opponents were staring at me together, Umm.....Uu!”

“Rico! Why are you not providing support fire for Lecty!”

“Muu, support is it. — Fuun, eat this.”

“H-Hey Rico! Why is your magic bullet coming towards here!”

“Sorry. My hand slipped.....I will properly hit the next time.”

Hey! W-Wait! Like I said, why are you aiming at me! The enemy is on that side!”

“— The one my muzzle aimed at is definitely the enemy.”

“Y-You, why are you aiming at me so persistently! Don’t tell me you hold some grudge against me!”

“.....If some brute did not destroy the city street, I would have been treated like a Goddess by now.”

“.....”

“In the end, the achievement of defeating the enemy Chimera and the destruction of city street cancelled each other out, a Goddess like me is also forced to write a report on the matter. It’s a rare chance for everyone to respect me as a Goddess for my active participation, but because of Misora’s fault, I have to suffer such a result.”

“— A-About that, I have already a-apologized!”

“And also Misora’s own house is included in the destruction, your father is eligible to receive war damage insurance. So you intended to scam the insurance at that time is it?”

“I-I won’t do such a thing! B-But I can’t just tell my father who is grieving over the destruction of our house ‘I am the one who destroyed the house, sorry’ like that.....”

“Even if the whole world forgives you, I, as the Goddess, will not forgive you. Fall, Misora!”

“M-Misora-san! Rico-san! P-Please stop!”

“S-Shut up Lecty. Before beating the enemy, do something about Rico first.”

“That’s right Lecty, you keep quiet. Let this Goddess give Misora a beating.”

“U-Umm — S-Sorry!”

**

“.....Kanata senpai, how exactly are they strong!?”

“Un. Well, this kind of thing also happens.”

Yuri was speechless for a long time, while Kanata just nonchalantly replied.

Ignoring the ranking battle before them, they started quarrelling amongst themselves. Lecty who was the only one remaining could only fight a defensive battle in a three against one despite having high level Magic Twin Sword skill.

This matter was not praiseworthy even if politely speaking.

Honestly speaking — The worst. It was F-rank squadron after all.

Chloe would normally follow up, but she was also aware that she had the responsibility for recommending Kanata as their instructor.

“.....S-Say Kanata. Your job is to make those girls win in the ranking battle right?”

“Un, it does look like Kanata’s style. I don’t understand their behavior after all.”

Chloe showed a stiff face while Lloyd seemed to be amazed.

But Kanata had a casual attitude like usual.

“Nn? Is it so?”

And spoke like that.

Seeing her senpai lack of responsibility attitude, Yuri spoke in a thorny voice.

“.....Senpai is irresponsible after all.”

“What is it Yuri. Weren’t you in a better mood than usual.....You have such a cold look.”

“I was expecting how much those students have grown in their ability, but honestly speaking, I am disappointed. I originally wanted to request a spar against the squadron senpai had put in so much effort for.....Excuse me.”

Yuri suppressed her anger and was about to leave audience seat.

“Wait.”

Kanata quickly grabbed Yuri’s sleeve as she stood up.

“Your request is quite interesting. Alright, I will accept it.”

He spoke those words with a confident smile. Despite showing an unhappy expression, Yuri regretfully stole a few glances at Kanata before leaving. She withheld her reply.

“Ah, sorry Lloyd. Can I ask you?”

“I don’t mind, but it will cost you. What will you treat me next time?”

Before finishing his words, Lloyd immediately left for Yuri.

“Mou, I thought that the relationship between you two can finally move forward, why are you speaking such irresponsible words?”

“But you see, the reason I accepted to be their instructor is not to let them win in the ranking battle, but to make them strong enough to survive

and live on. Of course winning in the ranking battle is also important, but winning the ranking battle is not my real objective.”

“So, you said something like that in front of Yuri.....?”

“Why are you getting angry.....Ouch! What did I do wrong — Ouch! I-I understand already so stop kicking my shin.”

“Mou, even though Yuri is definitely different from usual today.....It’s definitely Kanata’s fault so I will punish you.”

The battle became Lecty fighting one against three, but she seemed to be reaching her limit. Taking Misora’s symbol mark was only a matter of time.

“So then, how do you feel after becoming an instructor?”

Chloe asked with an amused face.

Kanata nodded with a confident smile.

“Seems like your students may become a strong opponent. Will you continue to make the squadron stronger?”

“Nn, facing strong opponents is what makes it interesting.”

Chloe noticed Kanata’s face changed after he said that. She seemed to

have seen this wild and ambitious face somewhere before.

“They still have much more potential. It may be possible to aim for S-rank.”

“Is it ok to boast such big words?”

“If those girls who were called F-rank squadron eventually became S-rank squadron, that would be very interesting. They who were called weak defeated those strong people, doesn’t that make you excited?”

The greater the adversity this man was at during the ranking battle, the brighter he would shine.

Chloe knew that. He was someone who had fun when facing off against an opponent stronger than himself. He was not afraid of fighting against strong opponents, and was someone who would never give up before finding a path to victory.

“Although they are still young hatchlings that are still unstable with their steps, they will definitely become outstanding Kuusen Madoushi in the future. What I can do is to do my best and guide them so that they won’t fall. They will become the Kuushi anyone will be surprised at. If it’s them.”

Now then, how should he call out to those girls who just lost.

Misora seemed to be scolding Rico, while Rico was logically rebutting, and Lecty was timidly watching over the scene with worry.

At Misora's neck was the squadron's symbol mark — symbolizing the power of world salvation, the pendant with a valkyrie wielding two guns engraved, but for those girls to become the saviors of this world, there seemed to be along way to go.

As Kanata glanced over the Arena where the ranking battle was interrupted due to those girls' quarrel, his mouth loosened.

[] [Main] []

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Afterword

First meeting with everyone. I am Moroboshi Yu who has received the gold award for the 24th final Fantasia Award.

On this occasion, I would like to thank everyone for choosing my work.

First, let me make a brief author introduction.

I am born in Heisei period. The first time I bought a PC and use Word Software to write composition was when I attended Tokyo University. I was living a no Internet, no money, busy part-time student life. I am definitely not some intellect, just a commoner you can see anywhere.

So in conclusion — Luck played a very important factor for this author to receive the award.

Though there is saying that luck is also part of the ability, I think that I will not be able to receive the award if I had no luck.

This is why when I obtained an author's life after so much trouble and I would like to do it until I die.

Even if this work is cut, I want to make a living in this circle for my whole life.

As long as I don't give up, the luck factor will definitely help me someday.....

Next is about this work. This work 「Kuusen Madoushi Kouhosei no Kyoukan」 is the edited content of the winning entry. It is the “While having serious battle, there is also cultivation of bishōjo, w-what should I do!?” type. As for the last “what should I do”, it is about how should the story develop from an author's perspective!?

W-Well, t-there will be a way somehow.....!?

If I try my best, it will turn out fine in the end right?.....It will probably be fine.

Actually, I am being chased for the plot of volume 2 as well as the short story that will be released in Dragon Magazine now. This is the first time in my life that I am writing the afterword and the continuation, all the things I need to do are my first time, though it's very busy, I am living every day to my fullest.

If you are interested, please take a look at the Dragon Magazine September issue (2013-Jul-20 on sale). A comedy short story has been released there.

In addition, I believe that volume 2 can be delivered to everyone by the middle of this year, please have a look if possible.

And finally I would like to thank everyone who took care of me.

First the editor N-sama. The reason this work can come out is due to N-sama's efforts. I would like to borrow this place to offer my gratitude. For example, immediately replying to the mail received at twelve midnight, receiving a phone call at twelve midnight from a greenhorn idiot and accompanied him to the end, thank you very much. It is published without any trouble thanks to you.

Next, I would like to thank the chief editor and co from the judging group, as well as everyone from the publisher that evaluated this work, then Amami Mikihiro sensei who drew the heartful illustrations. The author has little knowledge about etiquette, so I do not know how to express my gratitude properly and have reflected on it many times. I would express my thanks towards the Tokyo metropolitan area every night before I sleep, I wonder if you will receive the telepathy of the content?

Please mail me if you received it. I really don't have any friends, please somehow bring me along to play. Please also give me some work as well. My life is getting hard. (sweat)

And finally to all the readers.

Thank you for purchasing this book. I wish everyone who bought this book happiness.

Even so, this author is lucky in a sense. Even though I have no good looks, no good quality, no money, I still managed to live to this day. Being able to live itself is already lucky. Being able to meet everyone like this is even more so.

So then, I wish to be able to meet with everyone again mid of this year, and I will close the curtain on this note. For accompanying me to the end, really thank you very much!

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